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AND ITS
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STUDIES IN
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3379

By

DR. VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA

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To
My parents with reverence

PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

This book was written in 1950 and was accepted by the University of Chicago in candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. It was serially published in the *Journal of the Bihar Research Society* (1952-1953) in four successive parts. In submitting the thesis to the press I have made a few minor changes.

The topic of this dissertation originally evolved in discussions with Professor Sorokin of the Harvard University, Dr. Neumann of the Columbia University and Professors Strauss, Morgenthau and Easton of the University of Chicago. Professor Leo Strauss encouraged me in presenting a study of the basic concepts and ideas of Hindu political philosophy. My studies under German political scientists, historians and philosophers, a vast number of whom have migrated to the U. S. A. and settled in the various American Universities, strengthened my convictions concerning the metaphysical foundations of political ideas and theories. A large number of important contributions have been made in Germany in this field. I have tried to follow this methodology. It emphasies a rigorous study of the metaphysics and political conceptions of a culture and stresses their correlations. Prof. Benoy Sarkar, the visiting Watumall Professor at the American Universities encouraged me while I was engaged in my researches. Prof. S. N. Upadhyaya of Allahabad, who was a fellow-student in the U. S. A. and my younger brother Sri Vaidyanath Prasad Varma were great source of encouragement during my stay in the U. S. A. A State Scholarship of the Bihar Government and a University fellowship of the University of Chicago enabled me to conduct my studies and researches in the U. S. A. (1947-1950) and to make study-tours to several universities in Canada, Germany and England and I am thankful to the authorities concerned. I am also thankful to Professors Charles Morris and George Bobrinskoy of the University of Chicago for reading the thesis in manuscript. My wife, Pramila, has helped me in the seeing the proofs.

I take this opportunity to thank all my school teachers and College professors and Sanskrit pandits who have taught me. I am especially thankful to Dr. D. M. Datta who taught me western philosophy for two years (1945-1947) when I was a Patna University research scholar in Buddhist religion and philosophy. I am also thankful to Pandit Brahmananda who taught me several important and difficult Sanskrit texts. Rev. Ayodhya Prasad and Professor Y. J. Taraporewala were also great sources of encouragement during my student days. I thank Dr. K. K. Datta for publishing the thesis in the *Journal of the Bihar Research Society* before it was published in the form of a book. I also thank the staff of the libraries of the Columbia University, the University of Chicago and the Patna College and especially Mr. A. N. Banerjee, the librarian of the Patna College.

Vijayadashmi, 1953.

V. P. Varma
Ranighat, Patna 6.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

My book *Studies in Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations* was well received by reviewers, commentators and scholars. This strengthened my faith in the methodology which I had used for analyzing Hindu political thought on the basis of the philosophical concepts of ancient India.

The fundamental point in the methodology pursued in this book is to make a sharp distinction between *history* and *concept*. The mere existence of an entity or a fact does not imply necessarily the theoretical awareness of its existence. The laws of motion were operating in the universe perhaps from eternity but only late in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were they explicitly stated theoretically. Similarly, by utilizing the terminology of modern social sciences we may say that primitive society presents the picture of a non-coercive community. But this is our modern way of stating the result of utilizing scientific tools and concepts of the study of primitive peoples. It would be absured to argue, therefrom, that the primitive people themselves had an awareness of the distinction between non-coercive community and a society based on constraint. My main point is that we have historical examples in ancient India of actions which, in modern terminology, can be characterized as illustrations of the exercise of sovereign power but this does not mean the formulation of a theory of sovereignty in ancient Hindu political thought. Sudas, Bimbisara, Ajatsatru, Chandragupta Maurya and the Gupta emperors did exercise supreme political power and in this sense can be said to have exercised sovereign power. But this historical exercise of sovereign power does not imply that the writers of those days had a theory of sovereignty of the type we have in Bodin, Hobbes, Althusius, Rousseau, Hegel and Austsin. I will make similar submissions with regard to the concepts of state, rights and liberty.

Up till now, there have appeared books dealing with the administrative institutions of ancient India. A few books have also appeared on the history of political theories and Ideas. Perhaps this book of mine is the first book on "Political Philosophy of the Ancient Hindus." It tries to capture that Platonic-Ciceronian-Augustinian orientation of viewing things political in the framework of a fundamental metaphysic which is *also* the characteristic of a large body of ancient Hindu political thought. In order to strengthen the character of this book as a systematic work on Hindu Political Philosophy I have incorporated in it, in appendices, three papers of mine on (i) "The Sociology of Early Buddhist Ethics", (ii) "Theology and Ethics in Kautilyan Political Thought", and (iii) "Philosophy of History in the Bhagavadgita." These papers do not deal with the processes, forces and institutions of political life but are concerned with the comprehensive problems of ethics and socio-political philosophy. It is hoped these new appendices will increase the value of this book. Some new paragraphs and footnotes have also been added. A comprehensive bibliography has also been supplied.

It is hoped that this book will strengthen the study of Ancient Indian Political Thought and will serve to dispel that confusion among our writers which is responsible for mixing up of the details of institutional development and theoretical propositions. In the study of modern British political thought the student does not mix up the ideas of Wallas, Barker, Cole, Laski and Wells with the concrete processes of British Parliamentarism. Similarly, the political ideas of Jefferson, Calhoun, Burgess, Merriam and MacIver are separated from the actual constitutional and administrative history of the United States. But unfortunately, in the studies of Ancient Indian political thought, political theories and administrative and governmental details are mixed up. I hope this confusion will end soon.

If this book continues to serve useful philosophical purpose, my plan is to write an elaborate book on Ancient Hindu Political Philosophy.

Krishnashtami — VISHWANATH PRASAD VARMA
August 26, 1959. — Ranighat, Patna-6.

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INTRODUCTION

The great achievements of the ancient Hindus in the realms of religion, philosophy, logic, aesthetics and mysticism have been known to the western world for more than a century. But the social and political speculations of the ancient Indians are not so well known. As a matter of fact, serious study of Hindu political thought only began in the present century. This dissertation is an attempt to analyze the philosophical foundations of some of the dominant aspects of Hindu political thought from the Rigveda to the Manusmriti. Several scholars, both Indian and European, have written on the subject of Hindu political speculations but still I feel justified in writing this dissertation for several reasons.

So far, scholars have written mostly, either on the history of Hindu political theories or on Hindu administrative systems. Several of these attempts have failed to distinguish between the theoretical and the historical character of the ancient Sanskrit books. Hence they have rushed to very hasty generalizations. The theoretical and abstract nature of even such a monumental work as the Arthasastra of Kautilya has not been realized and hence several scholars have tried to construct a concrete picture of the Mauryan administration on the basis of this work. Our attempt is to make a very clear distinction among the source-materials of the ancient Hindu political thought. Only those works which are theoretical in character have been taken into consideration. An attempt has been made here to distinguish also between the theoretical and the historical character of the inscriptions of Asoka.

Instead of the unscientific use of concepts borrowed from western political thought detailed attempt has been made in this book to analyze the fundamental concepts of the Hindu thinkers themselves (e. g. क्षत्र, दण्ड, अर्थ, नीति, धर्म, etc.). The interpretation of the pre-Christian Hindu political thought in terms of the concepts of state, sovereignty, limited monarchy and the like which has been fashionable with almost all the writers on Hindu political thought so far, gives an inaccurate picture and hence this type of pseudo-modernistic methodology has been subjected to a scientific criticism.

For the first time the political philosophy of the Bhagavadgita has been analyzed in this thesis. The justification of political violence on the metaphysical basis of the Samkhya philosophy, and the Vedantic monism is one of the profoundest chapters in the history of political thought. So far, the Bhagavavadgita has been treated only in a metaphysical and mystical context.

I have tried to examine the political thought of the ancient Hindus in the context of its philosophical foundations. Some of the basic concepts of Hindu philosophy—like Dharma and Karma, have been accepted by all Hindu political thinkers. Hence much of the political thought of the Hindus loses interest unless examined in the broader framework of Hindu philosophy. The profound moral seriousness and religious character of Hindu political thought symbolised in the notion of Dharma cannot be understood unless its metaphysical background is analysed.

The one great lesson that I have learnt from some of the great western philosophers and sociologists—Plato and Aristotle, Kant and Hegel, Marx, Engels and Lenin, Weber and Spengler —is that it is possible to evolve an integral intellectual system simultaneously harmonising the generalisations of metaphysics, political science, sociology and economics. Hence I have attempted this intellectual enterprise to create a political philosophy of the ancient Hindus by trying to correlate and supplement Hindu political ideas with Hindu metaphysical systems and speculations.

I have been studying the philosophy and history of the ancient Hindus with reference to the original sources for the last eighteen years and in the formation of my own views I have been greatly inspired by the writing of Dayananda, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Tilak, Gandhi, Ramtiratha, Ramavatara Sarma, Satyadeva, Benoy Sarkar and Radhakrishnan. Among western writers on Indian thought I have been influenced by Deussen, Keith and Schweitzer. But I am no partisan of any particular view. I believe that truth stands on its own merit. Hence I have tried to analyse Hindu political thought in the detached scientific spirit of devotion to truth. Truth was the great guiding-star of the great seekers after knowledge in India and I have tried to say what I think to be the truth. My views are developing and perhaps, later on, I may have to modify some of my conclusions. But they represent the result of my studies and reflections thus far.

CHAPTER I

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND FOUNDATIONS OF HINDU POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

1. *POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN ANCIENT INDIA*

In order to obtain an adequate grasp of the political speculations of the ancient Hindus it is necessary to have a knowledge of the historical and institutional developments in ancient India.[1] It is difficult to specify a particular point in time as marking the beginnings of history in the Indian subcontinent. We have to talk in terms not of decades and centuries but of milleniums. We do not agree with the opinions of the Arya Samaj scholars who put the beginnings of Indian culture several million years before Christ,[2] and of A. C. Das according to whom the Vedic civilization of the ancient Panjab is about twenty-five thousand years old.[3] We have to accept the results of archeaological researches which, on the basis of concrete historical remains, carry the beginnings of Indian culture to about 4000 B. C.[1] From the remains found at Harappa, Mohenjodaro and other centres it appears that at those places there flourished a highly developed urban civilization. The inhabitants of these cities were in commercial and cultural contacts with the other civilizations of antiquity like Egypt, Sumer and possibly Crete.

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[1] Besides acquainting the non-specialist in Indian history with some of the salient features in the evolution of ancient Indian political and social life, this chapter has another purpose. It has been written in pursuance of a deliberate methodological plan. In the west, a new discipline called "wissenssoziologie" (sociology of knowledge) has come into prominence due to the efforts of Max Scheler and Karl Mannheim. Traces of its basic ideas are also found in Durkheim. I do not accept most of the conclusions arrived at by Mannheim in his *Ideology and Utopia*, but I have been fascinated by the idea of correlating the structure of the social universe with the intellectual structure. As a student of the Hungarian Marxist Lucaks, Mannheim was deeply influenced by the Marx-Engels idea of superstructure and ideology. Mannheim tries to trace the roots of conceptual processes in the social universe. I am mainly concerned with indicating the philosophical roots of political thinking. Hence Mannheim and myself are concerned with different types of intellectual enterprises. But although my purpose in this book is to analyse the fundamental metaphysical assumptions behind political thought and ideas, I do not accept a monistic interpretation of history. I do not believe that at all times philosophical assumptions have been the causal roots of politicial theories. I incline to accept a pluralistic interpretation of the genesis of thought. Hence I think that philosophical assumptions are *one or the roots and not the sole root* of political thought. The actual concrete historical events and phenemena are also vital roots of political thought because they pose a challenge which requires a solution. In general it may be said that there is more similarity between the methodologies of Max Weber and myself than in those of Mannheim and myself.

[2] Dayanand Saraswati, Rigvedadibhasyabhumika (Ajmere, ;India) Ramdeva, History of India in Hindi, Vol. I.

[3] A. C. Das, *Rig-Vedic India* (Calcutta, 1921), Chapters I to IV.

Round about the years 2000 B. C. this civilization was destroyed perhaps partly due to natural catastrophes and partly due to battles with other racial stocks. According to the majority of Indologists, henceforward we find the rise and development of the Vedic Aryan civilization. The question of Aryan origins is still undecided. Some anthropologists deny the existence of a homogeneous race called Aryan or Indo-European. Although it is true that in the Vedas the word Aryan often stands for a people, still we find that in certain Vedic passages it signifies a noble person rather than a biologically stratified group. The question of the original home of the Aryans—whether it was Central Asia, or the Punjab, or Tibet, or Southern Russia, or Austria is still controversial.[2] According to Tilak the Vedic seers have memories of an Arctic home.[3] It is sufficient for our purpose to note that in the Vedas we find references to a bloody struggle between the Indo-Aryans and a group of dark-skinned peoples who did not subscribe to the Aryan religious system.[4]

---

[1] Sir John Marshall *Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilization* (London, 1931), 3 vols. E. J. H. Mackay, *The Indus Civilization* (London, 1935); K. N. Dikshitar, *Prehistoric Civilization of the Indus Valley* (Madras, 1939).

[2] P. Giles, "The Aryans," *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I edited by E. J. Rapson (Cambridge, 1922), pp. 68 f; Dayananda Saraswati, Satyarthaprakash; H. Hirt *Die Indogermanen, ihre Verbreitung, ihre Urheimat, and ihre Kultur* (Strassburg, 1905); E. Meyer, *Geschichte des Altertumes* Vol., I and II. O. Schrader, *Reallexikon der indogermanischen Altertumskunde* (Strassburg, 1901); G. Childe, *The Aryans* (New York, 1926); S. Reinach, *L'origine des Aryans* (Paris, 1892).

[3] Bal Gangadhara Tilak, *The Arctic Home in the Vedas* (Bombay, 1903).

[4] Jean Przyluski, Jules Bloch and Sylvian Levi have investigated the philological-cultural problem of Pre-Aryan and non-Aryan loan-words in Indo-Aryan languages. See P. C. Baghchi, *Pre-Aryan and Pre-Dravidian in India* (Calcutta, 1929). According to Gustav Oppert, *The Original Inhabitants of Bharatavarasa or India*, the original inhabitants of India were the Bharatans or Gauda-Dravidians "branches of which are spread over the continents of Asia and Europe, and which is also known as Finnish-Ugrian or Turanian."

We should not confuse these dark-skinned Dasyu people with the modern Dravidian-speaking peoples of Southern India who probably belong to the Mediterranean race.[1] Nor should we be tempted to identify the Dasyus with the inhabitants of the Indus Valley because these latter were predominantly of Alpine, Mediterranean and Mongoloid stock. It is safe to remember that a systematic body of knowledge about ancient Indian ethnology is not yet even in its infancy and hence one must beware of making large generalisations.[2]

For purposes of our analysis we shall state that round about the second millenium B.C., according to the Vedic evidence, we find traces of a bloody battle between a group of peoples calling themselves generically Aryans and another group of peoples whom the Indo-Aryans called Dasyus.[3] Possibly this battle was waged for the acquisition of the mid-Indian territory.

The characteristic political institution of the Indo-Aryans was kingship.[4] The king ruled over either one or several Rashtras. We do not have any evidence to show that the Vedic king was originally a magical medicine-man. The insistence on the duties in war of the Vedic king would show that perhaps in the beginning he was a charismatically endowed heroic chieftain.[1] The Vedic Rashtra was not an exactly defined political term and to translate it by the word state would imply an amount of legal precision which did not obtain in those days. Of course, if we use the term state as anthropologists use it in the sense of cognizable political unit with an acknowledged superior, we can do that. The Rashtra was formed by the integration of the Kulas—families, Visah—the people or the tribe and the Janah or the clan.[2] These three terms—the families, the tribe and the clan—would indicate the populational structure of the Rashtra. The territorial structure of the Rashtra was made of Gramas—villages.

---

[1] Gilbert Slater, *The Dravidian Element in Indian Culture* (London, 1924), p. 22. Hall, *The Ancient History of the Near East*, pp. 173-174, suggested that the Sumerians were originally Dravidians.

[2] B. S. Guha, *An Outline of the Racial Ethnology of India* (Calcutta, 1937); *Ibid*, *Racial Elements in the Population* (Bombay, 1944). Guha's scheme of classification "six main races with nine sub-types" is controversial.

[3] न्यक्रतून् ग्रथिनो मृध्रवाचः पणींरश्रद्धां अवृधां अयज्ञान् ।
प्रप्रतान् दस्यूंरग्निर्विवाय पूर्वश्चकारापरां अयज्यून् । R. V. vii, 6,3.
वधीर्हि दस्युं धनिनं घनेनं एकश्चरन्नुपशाकेभिरिन्द्र ।
धनोरधि विषुणक्ते व्यायन्नयज्वानः सनकाः प्रेतिमीयुः । R. V. i, 33, 4.
त्वमेतान्नुदतो जक्षतश्चायोधयो रजस इन्द्र पारे ।
अवादहो दिव आ दस्युमुच्चा प्रसुन्वतः स्तुवतः शंसमावः । R.V. i. 33.7.
परि यदिन्द्र रोदसी उभे अबुभोजी महिना विश्वतः सीम् ।
अमन्यमानां अभिमन्यमानैर्निब्रह्मभिरधमो दस्युमिन्द्र । R. V.I, 33,9.

[4] The ancient Sanskrit word for the king is राजा. In the Nirukta it is derived from the root √ Raj to be luminous. The Mahabharata, on the other hand derives the word Raja from the root √ Ranj—to please, and hence it means one who makes the people delighted and satisfied.

Sometimes it is argued that monarchy developed in ancient India because the Indo-Aryan family was patriarchal.[3] Zimmer upheld that the social organization of the Indo-Aryans was patriarchal. Macdonnel and Keith deny such a view.[4] Even if it could be proved that the Vedic family system was patriarchal and I think it could, it is not possible to make a case for a causal connection between patriarchal family organization and a monarchical polity. Even to assert an invariable correlation between the two is doubtful. Some of the Vedic hymns contain prayers for kingship. Some passages in these hymns are cited to show the historical authenticity of the view that at certain periods in their history the Indo-Aryan clans and tribes lived under the rule of patriarchs. But it is possible to detect in these hymns the fact that the authority of the Vedic king was already established and hence we do not have reference to pre-monarchical patriarchal society under the rule of the Pitarah—ancient pristine fathers or Prajapatis—patriarchs.[1]

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[1] The relation between charisma and political power has been admirably discussed by Weber in his *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft*.

The following Vedic hymns (Rigveda vi, 75) contain an exaltation of warfare.

अनाविद्धया तन्वा जय त्वं सत्वा वर्मणो महिमा पिपर्तु ।
धन्वना गा धन्वनाजिं जयेम धन्वना तीव्राः समदो जयेम ।
तीव्रान् घोषान् कृण्वते वृषपाणयोऽश्वा रथेभिः सह वाजयन्तः ।
अवक्रामन्तः प्रपदैरमित्रान् क्षिणन्ति शत्रूंरनपव्ययन्तः ॥
मर्माणि ते वर्मणा छादयामि सोमस्त्वा राजामृतेनानु वस्ताम ।
उरोर्वरीयो वरूणस्ते कृणोतु जयन्तं त्वानु देवा मदन्तु ॥

For the relation between Kingship and war see Ihering, *Geist der romischen Rechts*, i, 378.

[2] Pramathnath Banerjee, *Public Administration in Ancient India* (London, 1916), p. 38; F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, p. 7 : "*Gens*, *Genos*, Sanskrit *Janas*, Gothic *Koni*, Old Norse and Anglo-Saxon *kyn*, English *Kin*, Middle High German Kunne, all signify lineage, descent".

[3] H. N. Sinha, *Sovereignty in Ancient Indian Polity* (London, 1938) p. v. Cf. the theory of the growth of authority in primitive times. W. C. Mac Leod, *The Origin and History of Polities* (New York, 1931) pp. 98 ff; According to M. Kovalevsky, *Tableaue des origines, et de l'volution de la families et de la propriete*, Stockholm, 1890, referred to in F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State* (New York, 1942), pp. 51-52, the patriarchal household community as found among the Oriental peoples, formed the transitional stage between the matriarchal family deriving from group marriage and the single family of the modern world.

[4] A.A. Macdonnel and A.B. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects* (London, 1912), II, 216. Henceforward only the name *Vedic Index* will be used ; H. C. Raychaudhry, *Political History of Ancient India*, p. 145 opines that the king was much more than being only a patriarchal president ; Charles Seignobos, *History of Ancient Civilization*, p. 49, also upholds the existence fo a patriarchal, martial and pastoral life for all Aryan peoples.

The Vedic society was full of political turmoils and these helped in the consolidation of kingship and its transformation into a coercive and dominating institution with emphasis on power---Kshatra or Kshatrasri. The Indo-Aryans had not only to fight the powerful Dasyus who had great forts, but they were also engaged in inter-tribal warfare.[2] To meet the exigencies of the times, great personal authority had to be conferred upon the king for the preservation of social cohesion and discipline necessary for success. But we do maintain that these constant wars only accelerated the processes of the extension of kingly power, but they were not the causes of the genesis of the institution of kingship itself. Kingship arose in Vedic times as a part of the process of integration of the families, tribes, clans and villages into the Rashtra---territorial unit or state.[3] Recent advances in sociological research have demonstrated the hollowness of the older theory which tried to discover the origins of kingship in war.[1] Our view is more in accordance with the conclusions of modern political philosophy.[2] On the other hand, we do maintain emphatically that the Vedic king was a war-leader. Sudas, the Vedic king, is hailed in the Rigveda as a great hero. Indra is the Vedic god par excellence because through his assistance and favours the Aryans succeeded in vanquishing their foes.

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[1] Narayan Chandra Bandyopadhaya, *Development of Hindu Polity and Political Theories* (Calcutta ,1927), p. 85.

[2] R. V., vii, 18, refers to Sudas's fight against "एकं च यो विंशति च···· जनान्"

[3] According to Marx and Engels, *Capital*. i, 386n, (also *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*) the family is not the original unit of social aggregations. Says Engels : "Subsequent very searching study of the primitive condition of man, led the author (Marx) to the conclusion, that it was not the family that originally developed into the tribe, but that, on the contrary, the tribe was the primitive and spontaneously developed form of human association, on the basis of blood relationship, and that out of the first incipient loosening of the tribal bonds, the many and various forms of the family were afterwards developed." Aristotle, on the other hand took a

The Vedic kingship was a dignified and exalted institution so much so that Indra and Varuna, two of the most important Vedic gods, were ascribed the attributes of a king.[3] But there were two fundamental limitations on the power of the Vedic king.

(1) The Vedic kingship was probably elective.[4] It is still controversial whether the king was elected by the entire populace or only by a select few, getting the acceptance of the subjects later on. Macdonell and Keith are sceptical about the existence of elective kingship in the Vedas. According to Zimmer, while Vedic monarchy was sometimes hereditary, as is indeed shown by several references to hereditary descent, sometimes it was elective too, though it is not clear whether the selection by the people was between the members of the royal

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different view. "The family is the association established by nature for the supply of men's everyday wants. But when several families are united, and the association aims at something more than the supply of daily needs, the first society to be formed is the village. And the most natural form of the village appears to be that of a colony from the family,......when several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the state (the *polis*) comes into existence."—*Politics*, 1252 b.

[1] For a criticism of the views of Gumplowicz, Ratzenhofer, Spencer, Bagehot etc., see Rudolf Holsti, *The Relation of War to the Origin of the State* (Helsingsfors, 1913); Robert M. MacIver, *The Web of Government* (New York, 1947), pp. 31-38.

[2] Cp. Thomas H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation* (London, 1941), pp. 139 ff.

[3] R. V., vii, 49,2,3. A.V., iii, 3, 3.

[4] In the Atharvaveda, iii, 5, 7, we find reference to the राजकृतः They included noblemen, headmen of villages, clever chariot-makers and skilled metal workers—ये राजानो राजकृतः सूता ग्रामण्यश्च ये । उपस्तीन पर्णं मह्यं त्वं सर्वान्कृण्वभितो जनान् । The Taittiriya Brahmana, i, 7, 3, states that the Ratnins give the kingdom to the king.

family only or extended to members of all the noble clans. Geldner argued that the Vedas refer to acceptance by the subjects and not choice by the cantons.[1] We do not have sufficient historical data from the Vedic literature to settle the matter conclusively. The difficulty is further complicated by the fact that the Vedic Samhitas were composed at different historical periods and by different authors and hence it is quite natural to find reference to contrary views in them. But in the Arthavaveda, as also in the Rigveda, we [find a very important hymn which was recited at the time of election of the king :

Gladly you come among us, remain firmly without faltering ; all the people want you ; you may not fall off the state.

Here be firm like the mountain and may you not come down. Be you firm here like Indra, remain you here and hold the state.

Indra has held it (the state) firm on account of the firm Havi offering, for it Soma as well as Brahmanaspati has said the same.

Firm (as) the heaven, firm (as) the earth, firm (as) the universe, firm (as) the mountains, let the raja of the people be firm.

Let the state be held by you, be made firm by the raja Varuna, the God Brihaspati, Indra and also Agni.

Vanquish you firmly, without falling, the enemies, and those behaving like enemies crush you under your feet. All the quarters unanimously honour you, and for firmness the assembly here creates (appoints) you.[2]

Before we comment on this hymn, it is better to analyse the theory of the state and the notion of Rashtra. Jayaswal translates it as state but this translation is open to objection on two grounds. The concept state is a legalistic term and came into use in Italy in the 16th century after a long development of political and juristic thought.[1] The earlier terms in European political philosophy to designate a territorial political unit were much simpler like *polis* or *civitas* or *res publica*. Hence in translating the word Rashtra by state we assume an amount of mature political development that perhaps was not present in the Vedic India of fifteenth century B.C. If we translate the word Rashtra by the term state, then in such sentences as "you may not fall off the Rashtra,"[2] "be seated on this high point in the body of the Rashtra",[3] "this Rashtra or *Rat* is for you,"[4] we will have to credit the Vedic Aryans with having anticipated the subtle distinction between state and government, a principle which became recognized in European political thought only with Bodin and was given a classical formulation by Rousseau and Hegel.[5]

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[1] *Vedic Index*, II, 211.,

[2] Atharvaveda, vi, 87-88; this hymn also occurs in Rigveda, x, 173 with slight modifications. The abbreviated forms A. V. and R. V. have been used for the Atharvaveda and the Rigveda respectively.

The almost conclusive evidence to prove the fact that the Vedic Aryans did not imply the conceptual formulation of the state in their notion of Rashtra comes from the Indian literature itself. In the Vedas we find references to a king of man Rashtras.[6] This latter phrase could not be used if Rashtra meant a state, unless we think that the Vedic polity was an imperial federation of many sovereign states. In the Aitareya Brahmana Rashtram is identified with dominion or rule-Kshatra.[1] In the Taittiriya Samhita the people are said to be Rashtra.[2] The Atharvaveda conclusively denies the attainment in the Vedic Rashtra of the conceptual abstraction involved in the state, when in a prayer it prays for the attainment of Rashtra, of Kshatra and animals.[3] If Rashtra is equivalent to a state conceptually, then Kshatra and animals would be comprehended therein as its components and do not have to be mentioned separately. Our view that the Rashtra does not connote the concept of a state is also substantiated from the evidence of later literature on Hindu political thought. We find no mention of Rashtra as a specifically defined political category in the Arthasastra of Kautilya.[4] In the first chapter of the fifth book of the Arthasastra Kautilya says; "Measures necessary to remove the thorns of public peace in fortified places and the Rashtra have been dealt with. We shall now proceed to treat of measures to suppress action against the king and the kingdom." If Kautilya would have been conscious of the comprehensiveness involved in the concept state then he would not have listed here four categories, forts, Rashtra, the king and the kingdom (Rajya) separately. The same conclusion is substantiated by such phrases and words and sentences in the same chapter : "Go out into this fort or this Rashtra" (गच्छामुस्मिन्दुर्गे राष्ट्रेवा) or "set up a district or a boundary" (राष्ट्रपाल्यमन्तपाल्यं वा). Kautilya refers to seditious persons in forts or in country (दुर्गराष्टदूष्यान्). He talks about the seditious chief of a country or district (दूष्यराष्ट्रमुख्यम्). These words and phrases definitely support my

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[1] George Sabine, "State", *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, xiv, 328, says : The modern use of the word (State) in the sense of a body politic first appeared in Italy (*stato*) in the early part of the sixteenth century ;... The use of the term as a generic name for a body politic whether republican or absolute, was probably fixed by Machiavelli (*Prince*, ch. i). Its earlist use in English in this connexion occurs in Thomas Starkey's *England* (1538), a book based on Italian authorities. The meaning became common in France and England during the sixteenth century and was adopted into official language in the expression secretary of state, an office held by Robert Cecilunder Elizabeth. During the seventeenth century *Staatskunst* became the German equivalent of *ragione di stato* and somewhat later *Staatsrecht* acquired the meaning of *jus publicum*."

[2] A. V., vi, 87.

[3] A. V., iii, 4. 2.

[4] The Satapatha Brahmana, v. 2. 1, 25; the references to the Satapatha Brahmana are to the English translation by Julius Eggeling, published in *The Sacred Books of the East* series. Henceforward the abbreviated form S. B. will be used for the Satapatha Brahmana. The abbreviated form *S. B. E.* will be used for *The Sacred Books of the East*. The abbreviated forms A. B., T. B., and T. S. will be used for the Aitareya Brahmana, the Taittiriya Brahmana and the Taittiriya Samhita respectively.

[5] Sometimes Marsiglio's statements with regard to the duty of the legislator to punish the executive, *pars principans* are interpreted as signifying a distinction between the state and the government—*Defensor Pacis*, Book i, Chapter, 18.

[6] R. V., vii, 34, 11.

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1. A B., vii, 22, 31.
2. T. S., i, 6, 10, 3.
3. A. V., x, 3,12.

ब्रह्मं च क्षत्रं च राष्ट्रं च विशाच त्विषिश्च यशश्च वर्चश्च द्रविणं च। आयुश्च रूपं च नाम च कीर्तिश्च प्राणचापानश्च चक्षुश्च श्रोत्रं च । पयश्च रसश्चान्नं चान्नाद्यं च ऋतं च सत्यं चेष्टं च पूर्तं च प्रजा च पशवश्च।

—A. V. xii, 5, 8,9,10.

4. Kautilya's Arthsastra, English translation by R. Shamasastry (*Mysore*, 1923). In the Arthasastra, i, 6, we find the word सबन्धुराष्ट्र ।

proposition that the sanskrit word Rashtra does not connote the comprehensiveness and legalism associated with the state. It appears that according to Kautilya the Rashtra meant no more than the countryside or the people of the countryside. At the place where Kautilya mentions the categories that form a kingdom he is absolutely silent about the Rashtra.[1] Sukra mentions the Rashtra as one of the seven elements of the kingdom.[2] He could not say so if he conceived of the Rashtra as a state because nobody can say that the state is a part of the kingdom.[3] In Sukra probably, Rashtra stands for population or people. It is of course true that in the modern Hindi languages the word Rashtra means the same thing as the nation-state but we can not read the modern meaning into Vedic texts.

We have only denied the existence of the theoretical concept of the state in ancient India. As will be clear later on, Hindu thinkers did have the conceptual formulation of some of the elements that compose a state—territory, population, government, and so on. They did not have one single concept that could connote in an abstract way what the term state connotes. But the repudiation of the conceptual existence of the state, does certainly never imply the historical non-existence of the factors that compose a state or even of the state itself. I emphatically disagree with certain writers who on the basis of a superficial acquaintance with Hindu history and thought deny the historical existence of the state in ancient India. According to Hegel, there could not be any state in India because of the absence of freedom both as abstract will and as subjective freedom and hence "Hindu political existence presents us with a people but no state."[1] Masson-Oursel, Grabowska and Stern think that the vast size of the country and the heterogeneity of the people were stumbling blocks against the formation of a state in India.[2] Cox says that Hindu society has been a large aggregation of practically autonomous small communities held together by mutual dependence and hence he concludes that Brahmanic India may be called a society without an organized state.[3]

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[1] स्वाम्यमात्यजनपददुर्गकोशदण्डमित्राणि प्रकृतयः ।
अरिवर्जाः प्रकृतयः सप्तैताः स्वगुणोदयाः ।
उक्ताः प्रत्यङ्गभूतास्ताः प्रकृता राजसंपदः । —Arthasastra, vi, 1.

[2] Sukranitisara, edited by Gustav Oppert (Madras, 1882).

[3] In the Manusmriti, vii, 157. we find that the word राष्ट्र is used along with अमात्य, दुर्ग, अर्थ and दण्ड as the five other constituent elements of the circle. If राष्ट्र signified the state than दुर्ग (forts) and दण्ड (punishment) should not have been used as separate from the state.

I do not hold that we can find the replica of the modern bureaucratic omnipotent leviathan in ancient India. But on the other hand I do hold that since Vedic times ancient India presented the spectacle of an organized political life under the leadership of a recognized superior. A mere glance at the vastness and orderliness of the political system under Asoka would convince the critic that he is faced with an extremely complicated political structure that comprehended under its sway a very extensive area. If, to prove the historical reality of a state, we have to show the concomitant existence of an organized population living upon a common territory under a specific governmental dominance we think that the history of ancient India can provide countless examples of such phenomena. Besides, as we shall show, such political phenomena were found both under monarchial and republican polities.

Moreover, in modern social science research we find that the once majestic concept of the state associated with Hegel, Bosanquet and Austin has been debunked. We find anthropologists talking of the existence of state and political authority under the most primitive social conditions.[4] We have references to democratic and diversified political structures in simple societies.[1] Hence if one can talk of the existential reality of the state in primitive societies, simply on the ground that one finds there the organized powers of social regulation, one is justified in talking of the existence of the state in the highly advanced civilizations of Vedic and post-Vedic India.

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[1] G.W.F. Hegel, *The Philosophy of History* (New York, 1944). p. 161.

[2] Paul Masson-Oursel, Helena de Willman-Grabowska and Philippe Stern, *Ancient India and Indian Civilization* (London, 1934), p. 85.

[3] Oliver C. Cox, *Caste, Class and Race* (New York, 1948), p. 70.

[4] Joyce O. Hertzler, *Social Institutions* (Lincoln, Neb., 1946), pp. 79-80 ; R. H. Lowie, *Primitive Society* (New York, 1920); W. H. R. Rivers, *Social Organization* (New York, 1924) ; B. Malinowski, *Sex and Repression in Savage Society* (New York, 1927) ; A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, *The Andaman Islanders* (Cambridge, 1933) ; Hobhouse, Wheeler and Ginsberg, *The Material Culture and Social Institutions of the Simpler Peoples* (London, 1915).

The hymn quoted above[2] puts a great emphasis on making the king strong in order that he could crush his enemies. This shows that the time was not one of stability and peace but one of bloodshed and threat of war. This would imply the need of great military power for the king to perform his functions. Interestingly enough we find in this hymn an invocation to the gods to strengthen the king. Such an idea we find in the religious literature of all the ancient peoples—Egyptians, Assyrians, etc.

The election of the king was for life.[3] But he could be deposed and expelled. There are some references to expulsion of kings from their realms and their efforts to recover their power.[4] At times the king was humiliated and exiled. Sometimes after a period of exile an ex-king was re-elected.[5] We are quoting below a hymn from the Atharvaveda which according to Jayaswal was employed at the re-election of a king who had been apparently driven out: "The people elect you to rulership, the wide glorious quarters elect you. Be seated on this high point in the body of the state and from there vigorously distribute the natural wealth."[1] There is not reference in the early Vedic literature to the exercise of the legislative function by the king.[2] Later on, especially in the Mauryan period it became more important. In the Rigveda the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the king is hardly mentioned.[3] Basu says : "The fact can only be explained by accepting that the king was not powerful enough or free enough to undertake all this but yet could enforce, by way of military discipline, the abrogation of direct revenge. This explanation seems to be irresistible if we look to the later Samhita period when the war was enforced by the king's courts. This is the natural result of the extension of the power and authority of the king."[4]

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[1] Bronislaw Malinowsky, *Freedom and Civilization* (New York, 1944), p. 298; F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, p. 79; Morgan speaks of two types of organisation in human history, the *societas* and the *civitas*. Ancient society or *societas* is founded upon "persons and upon relationships purely personal". As distinguished from the stratifications present in the *Civitas*, the *societas* is characterised by freedom and equality. Cf., Gunnar Landtmann, *The Origin of the Inequality of the Social Classes* (London, 1938), pp. 309-10: "Among the most primitive races tribal authority is exercised almost universally in the democratic form of a general council, while governments representing the monarchic principle are almost entirely absent among peoples usually relegated to the lowest group".

[2] Atharvaveda, vii, 87-88; see p. 10 infra.

[3] Atharvaveda, iii, 4,7, ; M. Winternitz, *A History of Indian Literature*, (Calcutta, 1927), i, 146 says: "There is an interesting prayer (Ath. III, 4) at the election of a King, in which the heavenly King Varuna appears as the one who chooses the King, the name of the god being brought into etymological connexion with the verb *var*, to choose."

[4] *Vedic Index*, II, 213.

A. V., iii, 3, 5., Winternitz, *op. cit.*, calls it a remarkable magic formula.

This limited character of the judicial functions of the Vedic king was not only consequent upon the fact that at least in some cases he was an elected official who could possibly be deposed, but also upon the fact that kingship as an institution was still in the process of growth. The term "Shatadaya" occurs in the Rigveda (ददातु वीरं शतदायमुक्थ्यम्—R. V., iv, 32,4) and it has been argued that the practice of wergild was present in those days. This would substantiate the point regarding the limited judicial power of the king. Geldner says that it is "reasonable to assume that the business of the assembly was general deliberation on policy of all kinds, legislation so far as the Vedic Indians cared to legistate and judicial work". From this it would follow that not the king but the Samiti or perhaps the Sabha would be concerned with judicial work.

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[1] A V., iii, 4,2. The English translation is from K. P. Jayaswal, *Hindu Polity* II, 8-9. Kausika Sutra, xvi. 30, refers to Kings expelled (अपरुद्ध) and their efforts to regain power.

[2] *Vedic Index*, II, 214.

[3] For the economic powers and position of the Vedic King, see *Vedic Index* ii, 214-215 : "Hopkins is strongly of opinion that the payments were made for protection—i.e., in modern terminology as a tax; but that the King was recognized as the owner of all the land, while yet the individual or the joint family also owned the land. As against Baden-Powell who asserted that the idea of the king as a landowner was later, he urges for the Vedic period that the king...is described as devouring the people, and that, according to the Aitareya Brahmena, the Vaisya can be devoured at will and maltreated... ; and for the period of the legal Sutras and Sastras he cites Brihaspati and Narada as clearly recognizing the King's overlordship, besides a passage of the Manava Dharmasastra which describes the king as 'lord of all'', a phrase which Buhler was inclined to interpret as a proof of landowning. The evidence is, however, inadequate to prove what is sought."

[4] Praphullachandra Basu, *Indo-Aryan Polity* (Allahabad, 1919), pp. 101-102.

2. A second limitation on any autocratic exercise of political power by the Vedic king was provided by the authority and functions of two institutions, the Samiti and the Sabha.[1]

Possibly the Samiti was the assembly of the entire populace or Visah because we find references to 'the whole people' or the Samiti, in the alternative, electing and re-electing the king.[2] We find mentioned debates and discussions in the Samiti and that would indicate its politically mature character. The following hymns will serve as an illustration :

> Common be the prayer of this assembly,
> common the acquirement, common the
> purpose, associated be the desire. I
> repeat for you a common prayer. I
> offer for you with a common libation.[3]
>
> Common be your intention. Common be
> your hearts. Common be your thoughts,
> so that there may be a thorough union among you.[4]
>
> ... ...
>
> May the enemy not win the debate.
> Overcome the debate of those
> that debate against us, render them
> devoid of force ?
>
> Overcome thou the debate of him that
> is hostile to us, O Indra ? Encourage
> us with thy might. Render me superior
> in debate.[5]

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[1] Cf. स विशोऽनुव्यचलत् । तं सभा च समितिश्च सेना च सुरा चानुव्यचलन् । सभायाश्च वै समितिश्च सेनायाश्च सुरायाश्च प्रियं धाम भवति च एवं वेद । A. V. XV. 9. There seems to be no justification for R. D. Banerjee's statement (p. 28, *Prehistoric Ancient and Hindu India*) that the power of the Vedic king appears to have been uncontrolled.

[2] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 11.

[3] R. V., x, 191, 3.

[4] R. V., x, 191, 4.

[5] *S. B. E.*, xlii, 137-8.

According to Jayaswal, the Vedic Samiti was the sovereign assembly of those times since it had the power of electing or appointing the king.[1] Of course, the characterization of the Samiti as being invested with sovereign political powers is the modern way of characterizing the situation. The Vedic Aryans were conscious of gradations in political power,[2] but we do not find any explicit reference to ultimate or supreme political power. We shall say more about the concept of sovereignty in ancient India later on. The very existence and functioning of the Vedic Samiti is enough to show that the structure of political power in ancient India was non-concentrated and diversified. In later times the village formed the basis of the constitution of the Samiti and hence we find in the Vedic period "the principle of representation appreciated and variously acted upon."[3] Probably at the Vedic coronation ceremony the Gramani or the leader of the village was present in a representative capacity.

The Sabha[4] was a council of elders and powerful men. According to Ludwig, the Sabha was an assembly not of all the people but of the Brahmins and the rich people, while the Samiti included the entire people. In Zimmer's opinion the Sabha was the village assembly. Macdonell does not accept either opinion and agrees with Hillebrandt in holding that the Sabha and the Samiti cannot be distinguished.[5] Dayananda regarded the Samiti and Sabha as two different institutions and we agree with his view. Jayaswal and some other writers also consider them to be distinct institutions. According to the Atharvaveda (vii, 12, 1) also the Samiti and the Sabha are regarded as the two daughters of Prajapati.

The Sabha was undoubtedly a gathering of select people. It formed some sort of an advisory body and the king came to be dependent on its advice and counsel but this is not tantamount to the existence of a tribal democracy in the Vedic age.[1]

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[1] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 11-17.

[2] A. B. viii, 6, refers to राज्य, साम्राज्य, भौज्य, स्वाराज्य, वैराज्य, पारगेष्ठ्य, माहाराज्य, आधिपत्य, स्वावश्य etc.

[3] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 14.

[4] R. V., vi, 28, 6 ; viii, 4, 9 ; x, 36-6.

[5] *Vedic Index.*, II, 426-27.

Besides the Samiti and the Sabha we also get references to the Vidatha which signifies (1) an assembly for secular ends, (2) an assembly for religious ends and (3) an assembly for war.[2] According to Bloomfield the Vidatha means mainly the 'house' and secondarily the 'sacrifice' connected with the house. Jayaswal regarded the Vidatha as the parent folk-assembly from which the Samiti, the Sabha and the Sena differentiated. But it seems to be a spontaneous and occasional assemblage rather than a regular and formal one like the other two. Besides the king, other officers mentioned in the Vedic literature are the Vrajapati, the Gramani and the Senani.

After the Vedic age[3] we pass to the period which is usually

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[1] The Atharvaveda contains an inspired hymn regarding the Sabha :—

सभा च मा समितिश्चावतां प्रजापतेर्दुहितरौ सविदाने ।
येना संगच्छा उप मा स शिक्षाच्चारु वदानि पितरः संगतेषु ॥
विद्म ते सभे नाम नरिष्टा नाम वा असि ।
ये ते के च सभासदस्ते मे सन्तु सवाचसः ॥
एषामहं समासीनानां वर्चो विज्ञानमा ददे ।
अस्याः सर्वस्याः संसदो मामिन्द्र भगिनं कृणु ॥
यद् वो मनः परागतं यद् बद्धमिह वेह वा ।
तद् व आ वर्तयामसि मयि वो रमतां मनः ॥

—Atharvaveda, vii, 12, 1-4.

In the Vedic literature we also find use of the terms सभाचर, सभापाल and सभापतिः ।

a. Basu, *op. cit.*, p. 85.

Cf. त्रीणि राजाना विदथे पुरूणि परिविश्वानि भूषथः सदांसि ।

—R. V. viii, 38, 6.

बृहद् वदेम विदथेसुवीराः —R. V. ii, 24, 16.

[3] Referring to some of the dominant economic characteristics of this period N. C. Bandyopadhyaya, *Economic Life and Progress in Ancient India*. (Calcutta, 1925, pp. 107, 109 says : "As yet there is nothing to prove that in the Vedic period the king was regarded as the owner of the state territory. The Rigvedic evidence shows that as guardian of his people he could claim his tribute only from his subjects. Nothing more is said of his being the owner of the soil. Later on in the Atharvaveda we find prayers for the grant of a share in villages to the king and this shows that he was not regarded as the sole owner of the villages,.........As regards the (a landed aristocracy) we have nothing in the Rigveda which proves the existence of such an aristocracy....The Chandogya Upanisad contains the gift of the village by king Janasruti to Raikva. In subsequent periods just gifts of villages were common and this contributed to the growth of the Mahasalas whom we find in the Upanisads and in early Buddhist literature."

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called the age of the Brahmanas. Since in this chapter we are giving a very concise sketch of the development of Hindu political institutions, for the sake of convenience we shall discuss at one stretch the period from about 1000 B.C. to the seventh century B.C. For this period we can rely on the political information provided by the three great Brahmanas, (a) the Satapatha, (b) the Aitareya, and (c) the Taittiriya. The Sadavimsa and the Gopatha Brahmanas are not important for our purpose. We shall also use for this period the data supplied by the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. We think that although from a theoretical and religious-philosophical standpoint the Ramayana and the Mahabharata are post-Mauryan, for details of political history they refer to periods contemporary with the later Vedic age.

The two dominant tendencies of this period—from the age of the Brahmanas to the beginnings of Magadhan Imperialism in the sixth century B.C.—are first, the consolidation of strong monarchical power paralleled with the decline of the Samiti and the Sabha and secondly, the rise of republican forms of governments which attained their maturity in the succeeding fifth and fourth centuries B.C. We shall discuss these points in some detail.

If the Rigveda is primarily centered in the "land of the seven rivers" (the Panjab), the principal geographical centre in the Mahabharata, the Ramayana and the Brahmanas is the middle Gangetic valley.[1] The territorial advance of the Vedic

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[1] According to Max Muller and Weber, the Rigveda was composed in the Panjab; Brunnhofer, Hillebrandt and Hertel argue that some of the hymns of the Rigveda were composed in Afghanistan and Iran. Sitanath Pradhan: *Chronology of Ancient India*, (Calcutta, 1927), p. 202 holds that "the valleys of the Ganga and the Yamuna were inhabited by the Aryans during the Rigvedic period." F. E. Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* (London, 1922) pp. 299-300, on the basis of the Puranas, refutes the theory of the migration of the Aryans from the north-west. He says. "Tradition or myth thus directly indicates that the Ailas (or Aryans) entered India from the mid-Himalayan region, and the altitude towards the N.W. frontier lends no support to any invasion from that quarter......Myth suggests the country Ilāvrita in the north as the region from which they came." The probable difficulties to his theory from the existence of Sanskritized names in the Boghazkoi treaty between the Hittites and the Muitannians, Pargiter would answer by the hypothesis of an Indian migration to Iran. Pargiter's theory has not found any substantial degree of adherence among indologists.

Aryans led to the gradual consolidation of kingly authority and the Sabha and Samiti were gradually replaced by a council of ministers appointed by the king. Kingship became definitely hereditary in this stage. The centralization of royal power possibly resulted in the diminution of village autonomy by making the Gramani—the village head, a nominee of the king rather than an elected officer.

According to the Aitareya Brahmana, we find different types of polities in that age.[1] In the eastern countries we find the form called Samrajya. The word Samrat is referred to in the Rigveda. Keith interprets Samrajya to mean a loose type of empire in which the overlordship or paramountcy of one state was recognized.[2] Jayaswal holds that Samrajya signifies "a combination of monarchies" or a federal imperialism around one dominant member.[3] In the middle country among the Kurus and the Pancalas the Rajya type or kingship was prevalent. In the north beyond the Himalayas among the Uttara-Kurus and the Uttara-Madras the Vairajya[4] type of polity operated. The word Vairajya is interpreted to mean sovereignty by Keith and kinglessness by Jayaswal. We think it only signifies some peculiar change in the character of the prevalent type of kingship in those days. In the west among the Nicyas the Svarajya type of polity was found. From a philological interpretation of Svarajya it seems that people in the western regions enjoyed more autonomy than in the others.[5] In the south among the Satvants the Bhaujya type was characteristic. Sometimes the word Bhaujya means non-hereditary leadership. The Mahabharata mentions Bhoja as a class of rulers. Keith interprets Bhaujya to mean "paramount rule" and we agree

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[1] The Aitareya Brahmana, viii, 14.

[2] For Keith's translation of these five types of polities, see Arthur B. Keith, *Rig-Veda Brahmanas*, (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1920), p. 329.

[3] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I. 39-40, 92, 94.

[4] A. B. viii, 17, refers to a king being called 'Virat' after his consecration by the Aindramahabhiseka. According to Sayana Vairajya connotes superior excellence— इतरेभ्यो भूपतिभ्यो वैशिष्ट्यम् ।

[5] Reference to स्वराज्य in the Atharvaveda xx, 109, 103, 1-3; xx. 113, 2 ; R. V., v, 82, 2.

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with him. The Aitareya Brahmana contains an inspired exhortation to imperialistic conquests and enterprise. It says: "Monarchy at its highest should have an empire extending right up to natural boundaries, it should be territorially all-embracing, up to the very ends uninterrupted, and should constitute and establish one state and administration up to the seas." A dynamic gospel of political expansion is contained in some other of its statements : "I want to attain to lordship over all rulers......I want to advise the conquest of space and time..... I want to be Sarvabhauma and be Ekarat of the earth up to the skies".

This five-fold classification shows that there were great differences in the forms of kingship. We already find in the Rigveda notions of gradations of political power, signified by various terms. This tendency to construct a hierarchical typology of kingly power is common in Hindu writers and we find an example of this in the writer Sukra.[1] This classification shows also the growing power of the king since it contains the term Samrat. In general, in the age of the Brahmanas and later, the power of the king steadily increased and royal jurisdiction was extended in the realm of justice.[2] According to the Sata-

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[1] Sukraniti, i, 183-187 ; the term नृपति comprehends the सामन्त, माण्डलिक, राजा महाराजा, सम्राट्, विराट् and सार्वभौम । The categorisation is in accordance with the principle of an ascending scale of control of wealth and power. The scheme according to Sukra is as follows :—

Title	Annual income in silver Karsa.
(i) सामन्त	1 to 3 hundred thousand
(ii) माण्डलिक	3 hundred thousand to one million
(iii) राजा	1 million to 2 million
(iv) महाराजा	2 million to 5 million
(v) स्वराट्	5 million to 10 million
(vi) सम्राट्	10 million to 100 million
(vii) विराट्	100 million to 500 million
(viii) सार्वभौम	500 million and up

see Benoy Sarkar : *Institutions and Theories* p. 224.

[2] In the Aitareya Brahmana (vii, 29), the king is regarded as one who devours his subjects (विशामत्ता समजनि). But this implies not unadulterated exploitation by the king of the people but possibly, means that the king subsisted on the basis of the revenue given by the people.

patha Brahmana the king is the wielder of punishment (Danda). In the early Vedic age we did not find any trace of organized criminal justice vested either in the king or in the assembly. This period also noticed the extension of the reliance of the people in general upon the king, against the encroachment of the nobles. Already the Atharvaveda contains the wish, "May the king become master of the princes."[1] The Chandogya Upanishad refers to the philosophic and enlightened idealism of king Asvapati, the king of Kekaya who asserts: "In my kingdom there is no thief, no coward, no drunkard, no man without the sacrificial fire set up in his houses, no one uneducated, no adulterer, much less an adulteress". This appears to be a remarkable forecast of the political idealism of king Asoka.

But although the power of the king increased and this development coincided with the diminution in the power of the Samiti, still in the Brahmanas we find references to deposition and banishment of the kings like Dustartu Paumsayan, Dirghasrävas and Sindhukshit.[2] Yet it would be going too far to read in these instances of deposition and banishment of kings notions of constitutional monarchy and limited kingship. According to Bandyopadhaya there are ample evidences pointing to the limited character of kingship in the land of the Kurus and the Pancalas because the Mahabharata speaks of the deposition of the king of Kosala by the subjects while in the case of the Kurus we hear of the constant interference of the people not only in matters of succession but in all affairs of the state. He adds that the epic political life is characterized by popular sovereignty and the subservience of monarchy to political opinion. We find it difficult to agree with these remarks. We may accept the historical authenticity of these cases of deposition, but this is not enough to imply limited kingship and a popular sovereignty. Sporadic intervention or uprising is a totally different phenomenon from a continuous exercise of political power by the

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1. A. V., iv, 22.
2. Narendra Nath Law, *Aspects of Ancient Indian Polity*, (Oxford, 1921), p. 11.
3. Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 161, pp. 156-161.

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people or their accredited representatives. Due to the decline of the Vedic Samiti and the conversion of the Vedic Sabha into the council of ministers appointed by the king, there was absolutely no legal or constitutional machinery to effectuate the will of the people in a systematic manner. Jayaswal thinks that the Paurajanapada was such a legal machinery[1] but his views have been vigorously challenged by other scholars. More than all this, nobody can deny that in spite of all these cases of depositions, the real decision-making machinery was controlled not by the people or their chosen representatives but by one person exercising monocratic political power—the king. In spite of all his arguments for limited kingship and popular sovereignty, Bandyopadhaya cannot deny the fact that the decision in favour of the Mahabharata war was made not by any popular assembly or diet but by one single individual—Duryodhana.

We would mention some other features of the post-Vedic polity. Epic royalty was intimately associated with an aristocracy comprising the king's allies and relations, subject kings, military leaders or knights and priests.[2] These nobles took part in the Sabha and led military enterprises. The Mahabharata shows the transformations of the Vedic Sabha. In the Epic we find the Sabha to be an assembly of any sort. It may be a judicial one, or court of law ; it may be a royal one, king's court ; it may be a social gathering for pleasure, and finally it may, in its older meaning be a political assembly.[3] The overwhelming testimony of the Brahmanas, the Mahabharata and the Ramayana demonstrates one thing very emphatically—the almost total disappearance of the Vedic Samiti and the transformation of the Sabha into an agency appointed by the king for executing his will.

The epics record some instances of abdication and abnegation of political power. The philosophy behind such action, which is oriented to an ethic of emancipation from the pain and miseries of transmigration, will be dealt with later. But we shall record some historical instances when kings left the thrones to their successors and retired to the forest to lead a life of contemplation and austerity. The Ramayana illustrates the tragic story of Dasaratha who could not materialize his desire to retire after giving the throne to his son Rama. According to the Mahabharata Yudhisthira arranged that his nephew should rule the kingdom and retired to the forest along with his wife and brothers. Such instances of voluntary abdication of kingly power are also found in the Jatakas. We have the instance of Nimi who renounced the world to attain the position which is "preliminary to Buddhahood."

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[1] Jayaswal, *op, cit.*, II, chapter XXVIII, pp. 79-108.

[2] R. K. Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization* (New York, 1936), p. 145.

[3] E. W. Hopkins, "The Position of the Military Caste," *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. XIII (1888), quoted in Banerjee, *op. cit.* p. 95. Cf. C. J. Shah, *Jainism in North India* (London, 1932), p. 92; B. C. Law, *Ancient Mid-Indian Kshatriya Tribes* (Calcutta, 1924), p. 41.

We shall make passing references to some other features of the Mahabharatan and the Ramayanic polity. The king could not levy taxes arbitrarily. There was no feudal concept of the ownership of all land by the king. Arbitrary punishments could not be imposed. Assessors were in existence and they determined the guilt although, as we have noticed before, the king's judicial powers increased because he had to pass sentence and execute it. We shall not take up the question of the ancient Hindu republics here but shall treat them at the end, for the sake of presenting a systematic picture.

We have been noticing thus far the progressive extension of the power and authority of the king. But in order to have a clear picture of the situation it is necessary to have in mind one very vital point. Positive statutory legislation which is the chief mark of modern states was, if not absent, at the most of small consequence in ancient India.[1] The daily lives of the people were governed by custom, Vedic laws, and the concept of one's own Dharma. Participation by the individual in the politically organized pattern of relationships was small—only a small segment of his personality was affected by things which we would

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[1] For the almost similar situation in the ancient European classical civilization especially before the rise of the plebians in Rome, see Fustel de Coulanges, *The Ancient City* (Boston, 1911), chapter viii ; Vinogradoff, *Historical Jurisprudence*, ii, ch, iv.

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call political. Hence, even if the political authority would have had glaringly vicious features these would not be apparent and therefore, while an absolutely rigid authoritarian rule would have been intolerable in small family group in which nearly every member participated with almost his entire personality, it could be tolerated in the context of the political universe which was remote and impersonal.[1] In small social and political units we find a density and intensity of feeling and attachment. The sense of belongingness and group-participation is very marked in small-sized political structures like the city or the *polis*. There is prevalent a great degree of personal acquaintanceship and it is easy to know the merits and defects of all the inhabitants. Hence if the principle of distributive justice is violated in the award of political and social honours it is keenly felt. If the principle of commutative justice is flouted in the administration of legal and penal sanctions it is possible to organize a revolt against the powers that be. But in the case of bigger territorial structures the lives of people are not dictated by the momentum engineered by the political superiors. The inhabitants become conscious of the existence of the coercive political authority only occasionally when they have to pay rents and taxes. Hence political authority assumes an impersonalistic character in big political entities. In ancient India the political superiors did not determine the currents and patterns of the lives and actions of the people.

The period from the seventh century B. C., onwards was characterized by the rise of two powerful movements. First, the rise of the imperialistic enterprise of Magadha which found its culmination in the rule of the Maurya emperors. Second, there was the rise of Buddhism. We shall take up the problem of the genesis of Buddhism and its influence on Hindu political thought and history later on.[2] Here we shall confine ourselves to an examination of some of the important aspects of Magadhan imperialism. It is interesting to note that this political movement was parallel with the expansion of trade and commerce with Western Asia, particularly Babylonia.[1] Political contacts with Iran were provided when Cyrus and Darius, the Persian Kings, invaded the northwest fringes of India.[2] Buddhistic literature shows that although in northeast India the predominant economy was rural, this period marked the rise of some important urban centers like Patliputra, Taxila and the capital cities of the states of Kausambi and Avanti.[3]

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[1] Among European sociologists a generalised typological approach to political authority is found in the works of Max Weber, George Simmel and Ludwig Stein. The attempts of Pareto, Mosca, Michels, Novicow are devoted more to the confined problem of the elite.

[2] V. P. Varma, "The Gospel of Buddha", *The Patna University Journal* (1946-47); *Ibid*; "Buddha and Marx", *The Patna College Magazine*, April 1946.

The Magadhan imperialistic movement was the initiator of the move towards pan-Indian unity. Since the Vedic days there had been a growing trend towards the unification of the whole subcontinent.[4] It must be borne in mind that India alone has been a world by itself—equal to the whole of Europe minus the European part of Russia. Since the exploits of Rama and his sons the concept of Digvijaya—the conquest of the universe—became an ideal of Hindu kings. This ideal of Digvijaya necessitated a decentralized structure of political power in ancient India. According to the Digvijaya theory, once the conquest was complete the vanquished kings were reinstated in their kingdoms as a matter of principle. They were *de facto* and *de jure* independent. The only limitation upon them was that they had to owe allegiance to the paramount king (Samrat) either in the form of tribute or personal service. Such empires could not possess unified control and could not devise an administrative mechanism coextensive with the sphere of influence of the paramount king.[1] Such a structure has been one of the greatest causes of the looseness and non-cohesiveness of Hindu political systems not only in the ancient but also in later times. Of course, it is true that due to undeveloped communications it was difficult to build up a compact political structure, but it cannot be denied that the theory of Digvijaya and the later theory of Mandala—"circle of the kingdoms"[2] did not visualize an unitary all-Indian political system but conceived of the predominance of one political unit amidst a circle of kingdoms.

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[1] *J.* Kennedy's article on the Early commerce between India and Babylon, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1898.

[2] Greek historians like Strabo, Arrian and Herodotus refer to this invasion. According to the Bahistan Inscription of Darius, the people of Gandhara appear as subjects of the Persian empire. The Hamadan Inscription mentions the Hindus or the people inhabiting the Indus Valley. The Persians are referred to in the Indian literature as the Parsus. D. B. Spooner's exaggerated views concerning Persian influence in Ancient India maintained in "The Zoroastrian Period of Indian History", *J. R. A. S.*, 1915, pp. 63-89, 405-455 have been controvertial by Thomas and Keith.

[3] C. A. F. Rhys Davids, "Economic Conditions According to Early Buddhist Literature," *C. H. I.* I, pp. 198-219.

[4] For extension of the Indo-European-speaking peoples in the Deccan R. G. Bhandarkar, *Early History of the Dekkan* (Calcutta, 1928), pp. 10 ff. Sri Aurobindo, *The Ideal Human Unity* (Pondichery, 1950), p. 36 says : "The beginnings of the centripetal tendency in India go back to the earliest times of which we have record and are typified in the ideal of the Samrat or Chakravarti Raja and the military and political use of the Aswamedha and the Rajasuya sacrifices. The two great national epics might almost have been written to illustrate this theme ; for the one recounts the establishment of a unifying Dharmarajya or imperial reign of justice, the other starts with an idealised description of such a rule pictured as once existing in the ancient and sacred past of the country. The political history of India is the story of a succession of empires, indigenous and foreign, each of them destroyed by centrifugal forces, but each bringing the centripetal tendency nearer to its triumphant emergence." Cf. R. V. viii, 37, 3, एकराडस्य भुवनस्य राजसि शचीपत इन्द्र विश्वाभिरूतिभिः ; also A. B. viii, 15, पृथिव्यै समुद्र पर्य्यंन्ताया एकराडिति ।

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[1] V. R. R. Dikshitara, *The Mauryan Polity*, pp. 78 : "The Mauryan state was a federal one. For it cannot be claimed to have exercised unlimited jurisdiction over states beneath it, a mark of a unitary state. But it was not a rigid federal constitution. It was a loose form of confederation made up of congeries of states".

[2] For the discussion of the theory of the *Mandala*, Arthasastra, vi, 1-2. A simple view of Mandala can be obtained by postulating a circle of twelve kings which can be classified thus :—

I. The विजिगीषु or prospective imperialist potentate in the centre.

II. Five kings in front of the विजिगीषु—
  i. The अरि—the enemy
  ii. The मित्र—the friend of the विजिगीषु
  iii. अरिमित्र—friend of the enemy of the विजिगीषु
  iv. मित्रमित्र—friend of the friend of the विजिगीषु
  v. अरिमित्रमित्र—friend of the friend of the enemy of the विजिगीषु

III. Five kings behind the विजिगीषु:
  i. पार्ष्णिग्राह —A rearward enemy
  ii. आक्रन्द —A rearward friend
  iii. पार्ष्णिग्राहासार—Friend of the rearward enemy
  iv. आक्रन्दासार—Friend of the rearward friend

IV. The मध्यम—intermediary
  The उदासीन—Neutral

Kautilya says :—

The extension of the political power of Magadha is one of the most powerful events in ancient Indian history. In its magnitude and influence it was a great movement. Magadha subdued all the neighbouring kingdoms and republican entities. Bimbisara and Ajatasatru were two of the greatest of the early Magadhan kings and are duly celebrated in the Buddhist records due to their associations with Buddha. Ajatasatru is famous for the great battle against an entire confederation of three dozens of powerful republics of eastern India. Success in this battle and in others made Ajatasatru the most supreme ruler in north-east India. About 400 B.C., the dynasty of Bimbisara-Ajatasatru was supplanted by Sisunaga. The latter made further conquests in middle India. His dynasty was succeeded by the Nandas. During the rule of one of the Nanda kings occured the raid of Alexander in north-west India, which has been wrongly called Alexander's conquest of the East or of India.[1] In a battle with one of the republican states in the Punjab, Alexander pretty nearly lost his life and so terrified was his army of the might of the vigorous Nandas that they begged him to retreat. Alexander's temporary raid did not leave any permanent political or cultural influence in India, with the exception of demonstrating the weakness of small republican states in the face of a united monarchical power.[2] Alexander established a few townships in north-west India and it was after defeating his lieutenant Seleukos Nikator that Chandragupta Maurya founded a new dynasty of his own.

एवं मण्डलमात्मार्थं विजिगीषुर्निवेशयेत् ।
पृष्ठतश्च पुरस्ताच्च मित्रप्रकृति संपदा ॥
कृत्स्ने च मण्डले नित्यं दूतान्गूढांश्च वासयेत् ।
मित्रभूतः सपत्नानां हत्वा हत्वा च संवृतः ॥

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[1] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 78. McCrindle, *Ancient India*: Its *Invasion by Alexander the Great*, p. 310.

[2] Hence Alexander is credited with having indirectly fostered Indian unity by reducing the power of the petty states of the Panjab.

Chandragupta Maurya defeated not only Seleukos but also the Nandas. This dynastic revolution occurred about 326 B.C. Chandragupta was aided in all his exploits by his Brahmin minister Chanakya or Kautilya. His conquests comprised not merely the whole of the Panjab and modern Afganistan, Beluchistan and Khorasan but at least nearly the whole of northern India. He is reported by some of the Greek historians to have acted like a tyrant in his conquering career.[1] We have an account of his administration in the writings of Megasthenes, the Greek envoy to his court. According to the latter, both in urban administration and in the management of the army, the "board" form was prevalent. He refers to the sevenfold stratification of the then Hindu society : (1) philosophers, (2) husbandmen, (3) herdsmen and hunters, (4) traders and manual labourers, (5) fighters, (6) overseers, and (7) councillors. According to Megasthenes one fourth of the land produce was taken as the king's revenue but Hopkins considers this to be an inaccurate statement in view of the constantly reiterated view of Hindu political thinkers and writers that one sixth of the land produce belonged to the king as his share for protecting the people.

Chandragupta was succeeded by his son Bindusara. In spite of the recrudescence of some local revolts, the latter had a long and successful reign extending over twenty-five years. Ptolemy Philadelphos (285-247 B. C.) of Egypt sent an envoy to the court of king Bindusara. Once there was a revolt in Taxila and prince Asoka was sent to quell the rebellion. As Asoka reached Taxila the people met him and reported : "We are not opposed to the prince nor even to the king Bindusara but the wicked ministers (दुष्टामात्या) treat us contemptuously". Bindusara was succeeded by Asoka.[2]

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[1] Justin, xv, 4 (McCrindle), quoted in Banerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

[2] The exalted states position and power of the Mauryan king will be evident from the following list of privileges (pp. 121-122, Dikshitar's. *Mauryan Polity*) enjoyed by the Mauryan king :—

i. The headhsip of the kingdom.

ii. The king was the owner of all the finds and treasure-troves valued 100,000 panas or above.

iii. All property where there was no legal heir would pass to the king. The property of the Srotriyas were excepted.

iv. All unclaimed property whether lost or stolen, lapsed to the king.

v. The king could not be taken as a witness in the law-court.

The characteristic features of Asoka's reign were two. On the one hand there was the consolidation of kingly power and on the other, he renounced warfare under the influence of Buddhism. The causes of the concentration of kingly power were many. The old Vedic Samiti had definitely passed out of existence and was replaced by the royal ministers and council of ministers. The foreign invasions of the Persians and the Greeks had demonstrated the need for pan-Indian unity. The new religious movements of Jainism and Buddhism sought royal support in their struggle for survival against the older religion. The Arthasastra of Kautilya shows that warfare was becoming increasingly more technical and formidable and this necessarily checked the ambitions of local nobles for war. The king could muster immense armed force against any recalcitrant noble. Asoka tried to foster the sense of Indian unity by setting up his pillars throughout the whole of India and inscribing on them administrative and ethical precepts in one uniform language---Pali.[1]

But although on the one hand royal power was growing, Asoka introduced the trend towards decentralization by granting autonomy to the Rajukas—provincial or state governors.[2]

Asoka's conversion to the Buddhistic religion marks a turning point in the history of India.[3] It transformed a local philosophical-ethical movement into one of the greatest world religions which brought under its fold the whole of eastern Asia including China and Japan. After his conversion to Buddhism Asoka sent missionaries to Egypt, Macedon and Western Asian countries[1] and these missions had perhaps an indirect effect on the rise of Christianity.[2] His conversion resulted in many administrative innovations because henceforward new officers were appointed to look after the moral and social betterment of the people.[3] He also claimed some authority over the affairs of the Buddhist church.[4]

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[1] Vincent A. Smith, *The Early History of India* (4th ed ; Oxford, 1924), pp. 174-175, holds that the inscriptions are in "various forms of Prakrit," closely allied to both Sanskrit and Pali. D. R. Bhandarkar, *Lectures on the Ancient History of India* (Calcutta, 1919), p. 32, affirms that they thatare in Pali. According to Sylvian Levi the Pali idiom did not arise till sometime after Asoka. He holds that Buddha and Mahavira taught in Magadhi or Ardha-Magadhi Prakrita. Rhy Davids and Wilson also hold that the inscriptions are in Pali. Cf. A. Banerji Sastri, *Early Inscription of Bihar and Orissa* (Patna, 1927), p. 115 : "Asokan dialects are evolved out of those in use when the Buddha preached. Literary Pali is regarded as another such product. But the origin of Pali is still obscure. Hence Franke's 'pali-grundlage' for Asoka is at best problematic. The striking similarity, however, between Pali and Asoka in phonology and morphology—inflection and conjugation deserves consideration. As a point of divergence may be noted the gerund in—*tva* retaining *tv*."

[2] Pillar Edict iv ; Rock Edict iii ; Cf. Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 129.

[3] Sir Charles Elliot , *Hinduism and Buddhism*, (London, 1921), i, pp. 271-72, says : "Asoka had a decisive effect on the history of Buddhism, especially in making it a world religion. This was not the accidental result of his action in establishing it in north-west India and Ceylon, for he was clearly dominated by the thought that the Dhamma must spread over the whole world and

His conversion had two momentous political effects. He established the policy of religious toleration, although it was not accepted as a settled political policy for all times because in late ancient and medieval times we have instances of religious

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so far as we know, he was the first to have that thought in a practical form. Edward Thomas upheld that before his conversion to Buddhism Asoka was a Jaina. H. H. Wilson disputed Asoka's adoption of Buddhism. H. Heras opined that Asoka continued to be an adherent of the Brahmanical religion till the end of his life. But the Bhabru or the Second Bairat Edict conclusively settles the question now in favour of Asoka's conversion to Buddhism. Radhakumud Mukherjee suggests that the personal religion of Asoka was Buddhism while the religion which he wanted to spread among the people was certainly not Buddhism.

[1] Asoka sent envoys to Syria under Antiochovs Theos, Cyrene under Magas Epirus under Alexander, Egypt under Ptolemy Philodelphus and Macedonia under Antigonus Gonatus.

[2] C. Mabel Duff, *The Chronology of India* (London, 1899)p. 12. E. B. Havell, *The History of Aryan Rule in India*, p. 100 says ; "In thus making the supreme power of the State identical with the moral law, Asoka's reign was not only one of the greatest epochs of Indian culture, but a conspicuous landmark in the history of civilization. And there is no reason to question Asoka's claim that the effect of his missionary zeal was felt far beyond the borders of his own dominions. Recent archaeological research has discovered evidence of the presence of Asoka's missionaries in Egypt, and as no religion can be explained or understood as a disconnected fact in the process of man's spiritual development, it is more than justifiable to conclude that the Buddhist missions established by Asoka prepared the soil from which both Christianity and Islam afterwards sprang."

[3] Cf. Beni Prasad, *Theory of Government in Ancient India* pp. 202-203 : "The state over which he presides is a missionary state exerting its utmost resources in the propagation of Buddhism and piety and morality in general. The third Rock Edict, for instances, requires administrative officers to proceed on circuit every five years 'as well as for other business, as for this special purpose. namely to give instruction in the law of piety......The example and precepts of Asoka had a profound influence on Buddhist theory of government. The new element that is introduced is that the state is given dynamic missionary functions".

[4] The Sarnath, Sanchi and Kosambi Edicts.

persecution. But perhaps the greatest effect of the conversion was that it halted the march of Imperialism beyond India.[1] According to the testimony of the Greek writers, like Megasthenes and Arrian, a sense of justice "prevented any Indian king from attempting conquest beyond the limits of India." Hence Jayaswal says : Only such a theory would explain the great fact that although Chandragupta's was 'the mightiest throne then existing in the world' (Rhys Davids) and so it remained under his two successors, and that although the Maurya emperors found their next-door neighbour the Seleucid empire, weak and crumbling, yet no inclination was exhibited to go beyond the Hindukush, the natural frontier of India of those days."[2]

Asoka definitely mentions that he had transformed "the beat of war drum" into "the beat of religious drum".[3] This renunciation of future warfare, at the height of his power, left a deep influence on the Hindu mind for all times.[4]

Asoka was succeeded by weak kings and these were soon defeated by the Sungas under their leader Pushyamitra in the year 185 B. C. The disintegration of the Mauryan empire after Asoka shows that probably Magadha had expanded too much. It could not organize the vast masses of people and it did not have adequate time and facilities to make the common sentiments of Indian nationalism a reality. The Sungas were supplanted by the Kanvas under their leader Vasudeva. The post-Mauryan era generally marked the reassertion of the old Brahmanical religion[1] especially under the Sungas, the Andhras and finally under the Guptas. The Brahmanical revival movement greatly influenced the political thought of the Mahabharata and Manu.

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[1] D. R. Bhandarkar, *Asoka*, p. 247: "Though on account of the missionary activities of Asoka, India, it appears, has been lost to nationalism and political greatness, she has doubtless gained in cosmopolitanism and humanitarianism which are the basic principles of Hindu society. It is true that as a consequence of the progress of the political science was suddenly arrested."

[2] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 191.

[3] Asoka says in the Rock Edict xiii : "(His successors and descendents) should not think that a fresh conquest ought to be made, that if a conquest does please then they should take pleasure in mercy and light punishments and they should regard the Dharma-Vijaya as the only real conquest." However, Asoka did not prescribe utter non-violence and complete political passivity. He says in the same Edict : "Even (the inhabitants of) the forests which are included in the dominions of Devanampriya, even those he pacifies and converts (instructs). And they are told of the power to (punish them) which Devanampriya (possesses) in spite of (his) repentance in order that they may be ashamed (of their crimes) and may not be killed".

[4] Asoka has been blamed for not foreseeing the disastrous effects of his pacifistic foreign policy. Hence several scholars hold him directly responsible for the foreign invasions which began about two decades after his death. But without denying the disintegrating influence of Nirvanistic ethics, I feel that the causes of the Mauryan decline must be sought in more material foundations, e.g. the political and economic structure. It should not be forgotten that althought Gibbon and before him Machiavelli held that pacifistic Christianity was responsible for the decline of Roman republican virtues, modern historians want to analyse the story of the decline of Rome with reference to the deeper-lying forces of lack of common nationalism and the corrosive effects of accumulation of wealth. Indian historical scholarship demonstrates a singular obtuseness to the prevalence of the economic fact in historical causation.

2. *REPUBLICAN STATES AND INSTITUTIONS IN ANCIENT INDIA*

The historical existence of republican states and institutions in ancient India corroborated by archaeological, numismatic and literary sources will cause a surprise to those scholars who conceive of absolute theocratic despotism as the only form of government in Asia. Hegel, a metaphysician, could be excused if he exaggerated the nature of Asian despotism. But those scholars who claim to be scientific and write on universal history, have absolutely no justification behind them if their knowledge of Asian constitutions is still limited to what Plato and Aristotle have written about the Persian empire.[2]

There are two Sanskrit words which are used to denote a kingless polity.[3] Sangha means a confederation of republics, when used in a political context. Sangha also means, in Buddhist literature, the ecclesiastical organization of the monks. The

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[1] According to the Divyavadana, Pushyamitra was a zealous Brahman and a persecutor of Buddhism. The earlier views of R. G. Bhandarkar and Harprasada Sastri about a revived renascent Brahmanism from the times of the Sungas to the Guptas, although modified in the light of modern researches have not been finally given up. For political details of this period, F. E. Pargiter, *Dynasties of the Kali Age* and K. P. Jayaswal, "Revised Note on the Brahmin Empire", *Journal of the Bihar and Orissa Research Society*, IV, 1918, pp. 257-65.

[2] Bertrand Russell, *Power* (New York, 1938).

[3] Julius Jolly is definitely sceptical of the translation of Sangha and of Gana by the word republic.

Sanskrit word Gana means an individual kingless polity. The word Gana has been variously interpreted. According to Fleet and Monier-Williams Gana means a tribe. Buhler translates it as a corporation of tradesmen and workmen. Jolly understands it to mean an assembly. Jayaswal has almost conclusively shown that the word Gana stands for what we understand by a republic—a kingless constitution.[1] The existence of such entities in Buddhist literature was first pointed out by Rhys David.

It is difficult to decide as to whether the Vedic Aryans, and especially the Kshatriya caste of the Aryans or some other racial stock originated the republican type of constitution in ancient India. According to Zimmer,[2] there are traces, in a passage of the Rigveda,[3] of kinglessness in some clans, the members of the royal house holding equal power. It is difficult to find any specific trace of a republican constitution before the eight century B.C. For purposes of convenience we can divide the history of the republics into two parts, (a) pre-Mauryan until about 325 B. C.,[4] and (b) post-Mauryan from about 175 B.C. to about 325 A.D. In the first period we find the most important republican states in northern India—the Lichhavis, the Sakiyas and the republican states and cities of the Panjab referred to by the Greek historians. In the second period the most famous states were the Yaudheyas and the Malavas. Rudradaman (125-150 A.D.) inflicted defeat on the Yaudheya republic and finally the Gupta empire conquered the republican states and henceforward republicanism as a political type ceased to exist in ancient India.

According to the Mahabharata five republican peoples—the Andhakas, the Vrishnis, the Yadavas, the Kukuras and the

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[1] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 26.

[2] Heinrich Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, pp. 176-77, quoted in Law, *op. cit.*, p. 8.

[3] R. V., x, 97, 6.

[4] Referring to the republics at the time of Buddha, T. W. Rhys Davids, "The Early History of the Buddhists", *C. H. I.*, i, p. 175 says :— "a number of republics ; some with complete some with a more or less modified independence ; and one or two of very considerable power. This reminds us of the political situation at about the same period in Greece."

Bhojas—formed themselves into a confederation and Krishna was made the confederate president. Each of the constituent states of the confederation was, however, an autonomous unit under its own chief called Isvara—master or lord. Panini, the great Sanskrit grammarian, refers to Ayudhajivi—"living by arms"—republics.[1] It seems, these republican states specialized in the military arts—they were the Spartas of ancient India. But Jayaswal is certainly exaggerating when he interprets a sutra of Panini to imply the existence of the bicameral system in some of the republics.[2] In the sixth century B.C. the non-monarchical states were quite numerous and "occupied the whole country east of Kosala between the mountains and the Ganges—as also the Panjab."[3]

We shall mention some of the characteristic features of these republican states. In the Lichchhavi republic political power was confined to 7,707 families.[4] The leadership of the army was vested in an elected chief. The Sakiya republic had a big assembly hall where all important decisions were made. Buddha was the son of president of this republic. Megasthenes, the Greek envoy to the court of Chandragupta, records that there had been a transition from monarchy to republic in some states and we find a corroboration of this statement in the histories of the Ambasthas, the Sibis and the Yaudheyas.[5] According to Greek writers who accompanied Alexander on his campaign to India, there was a house of elders in some of the republics. In the Saubhuti and Katha states, the public authorities passed judgments as to which of the newborn children were to be allowed to grow into citizens.[1] Diodorus notes the dyarchical character of the Patala city government. Here he notes the presence of two hereditary kings of two different houses while a council of elders rules the whole state with paramount authority.[2] There is reference to 5,000 councillors in the parliament of the Yaudheya republic. The debates in the assemblies of these republics were very keen and we find terms referring to "voting tickets" and to officers who saw whether the lawful quorum of the assembly was there before political business could be discussed.[3] Birth seems to be the criterion for political participation in at least the aristocratic and oligarchic republics.[4] This would indicate that in some of the most important republics—the Lichchhavis, the Mallas, the Sakiyas—there was a combination of political and social power. Wealth as such does not seem to have been emphasized as a necessary qualification for sharing in political activities.

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[1] आयुधजीविसंघाञ् ञ्यड्वाहीकेष्वब्राह्मणराजन्यात्, Ashtadhyayi, v, 3, 114. Goldstucker and Bhandarkar place Panini before Buddha. Bohtlingk places him around the middle of the fourth century B. C.

[2] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 44; निवासचितिशरीरोपसमाधानेष्वादेश्च कः । संघे चानौत्तराधर्ये । —Panini, Ashtadhyayi iii, 3, 41-42.

[3] *C. H.* Iy, 1, 175.

[4] Masson-Oursel, Grobowska, etc., *Op. cit.*, p. 89.

[5] McCrindle, *Megasthenes*, pp. 38, 40, quoted in Jayaswal, *op. cit*, I, 25. See also *Ibid.*, 1, 74.

The republican states were small in territory and population and hence a number of them succumbed to the Mauryan imperialism. But their defeats cannot solely be ascribed to the success of the Mauryan policy in marshalling political and diplomatic forces against them. The republics had already been shattered by the defeat of their great confederacy by the Magadhan king Ajatasatru. Perhaps this great confederacy consisted of more than sixteen states, some of which were monarchical. The republics of the Panjab had been weakened by the fight against Alexander and hence they were easily conquered by the Mauryans. The republican polity was given a death blow by the Guptas who rose to power in north India in the fourth century A. D.

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[1] *Ibid.*, 1, 66. Cf. the proposal in Plato's *Republic* p. 461 : "The proper officers will take the offspring of the good parents to the pen or fold and there they will deposit them with certain nurses who dwell in a separate quarter; but the offspring of the inferior, or of the better when they chance to be deformed will be put away in some mysterious, unknown place as they should be."

[2] Quoted *in* Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I. 77.

[3] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 120.

[4] *Ibid.*, I. 27.

We do not find any systematic philosophy of republicanism in ancient India. Possibly this was due to the fact that when in about the fourth century B. C. political theorising began, republicanism as a polity was getting weaker and weaker It is surprising, nevertheless, that although some of the republican entities had a long life they did not produce any significant political philosophy as was done by the Greek republics. The Buddhist literature contains the famous sermon of Buddha where he lays down seven techniques for the preservation of power in republican states.[1] Among these he especially mentions full and frequent assemblies meeting together in harmony and acting in accordance with the old institutions. In the Mahabharata, too, we find a categorization of the techniques for the preservation of political power in republican states. Kautilya has one chapter in his Arthasastra about the republics but he discusses therein the ways and means whereby a king could foment dissensions in a republic and conquer it.[2] This sketch of the republican states and institutions, apart from its intrinsic interest, prepares us to understand the general political temperament of the ancient Hindus and thereby facilitates an appreciation of the theories of regicide and the elective theory of the origin of kingship which we shall discuss later.

3. *SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN ANCIENT INDIA*

It will be very useful to have some idea about the social system in ancient India for understanding Hindu political philosophy. The dominant theme in Hindu social thought and practice is the specific duty of the four castes[3] and the four

[1] Rhys Davids, *Dialogues or the Buddha*, Vol. II (London, 1910), 79-85.

[2] Arthasastra, xi (संघवृत्तम् भेदोपादानानि उपांशुदण्डश्च).

[3] The word caste comes from the Portuguese *casta*, "race", or from Latin *castus*. "A caste may, therefore, be defined as an endogamus group or collection of such groups bearing a common name and having the same traditional occupation, who are so linked together by these and other ties, such as the tradition of a common origin and the possession of the same tutelary deity, and the same social status, ceremonial observances and family priests, that they regard themselves, and are regarded by others, as forming a single homogeneous community".—*Census Report*, 1911, i, p. 367. Of course this sociological characterisation of caste would only be partially true of the older Indian society with which we are primarily concerned.

orders of society. Here it is necessary to note that due to the existence of the caste system Hindu society was very different from any social structure characterized by impersonalistic interaction and legal contractual relationships.[1] Social relationships in the ancient Indian societies were dominated more by notions of status and a community of feeling rather than by contract and formalized patterns of behaviour. The Hindu generic terms for society are Loka—people or Bhutas—living beings. This latter term is broader than the word society and includes not only human but all living beings. Due to a comprehensive universalistic notion we find that both Kautilya and the Bhagavadgita put forward "the good of all living beings as the goal of political life.[1] But usually when talking of legal matters Hindu thinkers speak of the Loka—people—divided into four orders and four castes.[2] Therefore it was considered that a man is not born in a society but in a particular caste and this determined his choice of vocation in life.

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[1] Henry S. Maine, *Early History of Institutions* (London, 1875) ; *Ibid., Ancient Law* (London, 1870) ; Ferdinand Tonnies, *Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft* (Leipzig, 1887) ; Emil Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society*, trans. George Simpson (New York,, 1933). Referring to the traditional conservatism of Indian and Asiatic societies Marx, *Capital*, I, pp. 392—94 says : "Those small and extremely ancient Indian communities, some of which have continued down to this day, are based on possession in common of the land, on the blending of agriculture and handicrafts and on an unalterable division of labour, which serves, whenever a new community is started, as a plan and scheme ready cut and dried……. Hence, production here is independent of that division of labour brought about, in Indian society as a whole, by means of the exchange of commodities. It is the surplus alone that becomes a commodity , and a portion of even that, not until it it has reached the hands of the state,……. The simplicity of the organisation for production in these self-sufficing communities that constantly reproduce themselves in the same form, and when accidentally destroyed, spring up again on the spot and with the same name—this simplicity supplies the key to the secret of the unchangeableness of Asiatic societies, an unchangeableness in striking contrast with the constant dissolutions and refounding of Asiatic States, and the never-ceasing changes of dynasty. The structure of the economical elements of society remains unchanged by the stormclouds of the political sky.` Taking the hint from the Marx-Engels theory of the Asiatic or the *Gens* or the primitive communal type of organisation as preceding slavery, in the evolutionary growth human society, S. A. Dange, *India From Primiitive Communism to Slavery* (Bombay, 1951), pp. 40 53, interprets the Yajna to be the collective mode of production of the Aryan commune. Suffice it to say that the whole question of the historical existence of the primitive commune is still undecided among anthropologists and historical sociologists. The concept of the primitive commune is supposed to be a historical reality by Sir Henry Maine, William Stubbs, Lewis Morgan, Maxim Kovalevsky, Otto Gierke, George Maurer etc. The opposite point of view is sponsored by Fustel de Coulanges. Max Weber, *General Ecomonic History* (New York, 1927), pp. 24-25, maintained that the question of a primitive agrarian commune could neither be proved nor disproved. The scanty references to a remotely possible communal method of production in the Vedic and later literature are certainly not corroborative of an actual primitive commune. But still there is some truth in the above quoted statement from Marx's *Capital*, to the extent that it hints at a material and tangible source of the dominant conservatism of Asiatic society and does not confuse the issue by emphasising chimeras.

The Vedas—the most ancient literature of the Aryans—show that the caste system began to develop in the later Vedic age and is referred to in the latest portions of the Rigveda and the Yajurveda. The subject of the origin of the caste system has been endlessly debated. The old literature contains a mythical account of its origin. The cosmic self-Puruṣa produced all the four castes out of itself. The Brahmins were the mouth, the Kshatriyas the hands, the Vaisyas the thighs and the Sudras the feet of the cosmic self.[3]

Modern investigators think that the caste system was born out of the desire of the Vedic Aryans to maintain the purity of their blood from being contaminated with the conquered dark-skinned peoples.[4] This racial origin of the caste system has been widely accepted by European Indologists.[5] Some Hindu scholars tend to accept an economic origin of the caste system.[6] The fourfold division of society is thus interpreted to be a division based on difference of labour. The original name for caste in Sanskrit is Varna which means colour. This would tend to support a hypothesis about the racial and not the economic origin of the system. In the Mahabharata also it is stated that at the time of the creation of the four Varnas, complexion was a differentiating criterion—the Brahmans were white, the Kshatriyas were red, the Vaisyas were yellow and the Sudras were black.

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[1] Arthasastra, i, 4. तस्यामायत्ता लोकयात्रा । तस्माल्लोकयात्रार्थी नित्यमुद्यतदण्डः स्यात् । Also the word प्रजा in प्रजानां विनये रतः —*Ibid*, i. 5.

[2] *Ibid*., i, 6 ; *Ibid*, iii, 1.

[3] ब्राह्मणोऽस्य मुखमासीद् बाहूराजन्यः कृतः । ऊरू तदस्य यद्वैश्यः पद्भ्यां शद्रोऽजायत ।—(V. S. xxxi, 11.).

[4] हिरण्ययमुत भोगं ससान हत्वी दस्यन् प्रार्यं वर्णमावत् ।—R. V. iii, 34, 9.

[5] H. H. Risley, *People of India* ; Z. A. Ragozin, *Vedic India*, p. 283 ; Gustav Oppert, *op. cit*., p. 282.

Geldner denied the existence of the caste system in any form in the Rigveda in his *Vedische Studien*, vol. ii. p. 146 but Oldenberg and others have maintained its existence. According to Pargiter, *Ancient Indian Historical Tradition* p. 306 : "Brahmanism then originally was not an Aila or Aryan institution. The earliest Brahmanas were connected with the non-Aryan peoples". This theory would seriously jeopardise the racial hypothesis about the origin of the caste. Haugand Kern maintained the existence of caste even before the Indo-Iranian separ ation.

[6] Bhupendranath Datta, *Studies in Indian Social Polity* (Calcutta, 1944) pp. 450-51 : "*Varna* was not a caste, and caste originally had an economic basis. It was the occupation of a group of men that determined their position in the society.... The *Varna* was a fiction in historical period, but"the occupational grouping became the reality". On p. 444 Datta says : the original Hindu society did not know the caste system. In the primeval days of the Vedas, the *varnas* were the representations of social grades and as such they were classes and not stereotyped hereditary castes. The latter-day

According to the later lawgivers, the Bhagavadgita and, Kautilya's Arthasastra, the Brahmin class was mostly concerned with intellectual and spiritual enterprises, the Kshatriyas with militaristic and administrative tasks, the Vaisyas with agricultural and commercial functions and the Sudras with servile and menial works of life. But in spite of this fourfold classification, in actual practice there were since the Vedic days, many subcastes, but roughly they could be put in one of the four big categories.

The Brahmins were at top of the social scale and were concerned with the functions both of an intellectual elite and of a priesthood.[1] In most ancient societies the priesthood enjoyed great prestige for its astrological and eschatological knowledge. It could reveal the mystery of heavens and death.[2] It controlled life by magical devices.[3] But in a refined society, like that of the Vedic Aryans and their successors, the Brahmins counted much

allegory of the purusha-sukta had its counterpart in the Avestic legend of Persia and the legend of the Teutonic Saga. In fact, four-fold division of society was common to many countries of the ancient world extending from China to Germany. It was not a special evolution of the Indian *milieu*. Further, the different social divisions of the ancient Zoroastrian society of Persia had dresses of different colours to distinguish themselves. Similar difference of dress we find in the Middle Age society of Europe." Professional specialization is supposed to be the dominant factor in the caste system by Nesfield.

[1] Max Weber, *Essays in Sociology*, translated by Gerth and Mills (New York, 1946), pp. 396-97, 268-269. Cf. Manusmriti, xi, 33 : "without hesitation the Brahmin shall make use of the sacred texts of the Atharvaveda ; the word indeed is the weapon of the Brahmin ; therewith may he kill his enemies," Quotd in Winternitz, *op. cit.*, p. 147.

[2] Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West* (New York, 1928), II, 352., cf., the Magi of Persia and the Pontiffs of Rome.

[3] Law, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

more upon their intellectual superiority.[1] The Brahmins were the principal conservators of the revealed Vedic tradition. Although the Kshatriyas took a prominent part in the production of the Upanishadic philosophy,[2] still in general, the Brahmins were the custodians of the sacred literature and remained so in spite of the fact that time and again, great teachers, sages and philosophers came from the Kshatriya caste and even from the castes further down. In the later periods of Indian history the Brahmins also enjoyed judicial power and there are references in the Mahabharata to this effect. Kautilya and Sukra advocate such practice. In later times they came to enjoy several immunities and privileges especially in taxation.

The supremacy of the Brahmins was intellectually advocated by the political and social philosophers also. According to Kautilya the king was to follow the Purohita in the same way as a student follows the teacher, the son his father and the servant his master (तमाचार्यं शिष्यः पितरं पुत्रो भृत्यः स्वामिनमिव चानुवर्तेत). The Purohita was to be a man of respectable family well versed in the ancient sacred and literary tradition and proficient in the Atharvaveda and the science of government. In case he committed serious offences he could be dismissed and imprisoned but in no case was he to be put to death, with the single exception of high treason. According to the Manusmriti the king was to show reverence to the aged Brahmins who are Vedic scholars and are pure. The most important political affairs relating to the six measures of the royal policy were to be deliberated upon by

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1. The following verses, R. V. iv, 50, 7-9, refer to the power of the बृहस्पति (Brahmin) over the king.

स इद् राजा प्रतिजन्यानि विश्वा शुष्मेण तस्थावभि वीर्येण ।
बृहस्पतिं यः सुभृतं बिभर्ति वल्गूयति वन्दते पूर्वभाजम् ॥
स इत् क्षेति सुधित ओकसी स्वे तस्मा इड़ा पिन्वते विश्वदानीम् ।
तस्मै विशः स्वयमेवा नमन्ते यस्मिन् ब्रह्मा राजनि पूर्व एति ।
अप्रतीतो जयति संधनानि प्रतिजन्यान्युत या सजन्या ।
अवस्यवे यो वरिवः कृणोति ब्रह्मणे राजा तमवन्ति देवाः ।

2. Garbe, Winternitz and Hertel accept the Kshatriya origin of the Upanisadic philosophy, although in *Samkhya-Philosophy*, *p.* 13, Garbe tended to modify his views.

the king with the most distinguished among the ministers—a learned Brahmin (सर्वेषां तु विशिष्टेन ब्राह्मणेन विपश्चिता मन्त्रयेत् परमं मन्त्रम्). The king was to honour those Brahmins who had returned from the preceptor's house after studying the Veda, "for that money which is given to Brahmins is declared to be an imperishable treasure for kings."

But in spite of enjoying tremendous social and intellectual prestige and superiority the Brahmins did not establish a theocracy in India.[1] Western scholars are mistaken when they refer to Brahmanism being the classic example of theocracy in ancient times.[2] It is true that in later times there were some Brahmin kingly dynasties but these were not due to the fact that these candidates for the royal throne were being sponsored by Brahmanism as an organized ecclesiastical corporation or group.[3] These persons had the necessary skill to get into political office and they also happened to be members of the Brahmin caste. We have to distinguish between individual Brahmins and Brahmins as a priestly group. We could have spoken of theocracy only in case of a priestly group getting monarchical power or of a king exercising also priestly functions

[1] R. V. i, 128, 8; cf. Zimmer, *Altindisches Leben*, p. 205n.

[2] Heinrich von Treitschke, *Politics*, English translation by Blanche Dugdall and Torben De Bille (New York, 1916), II, pp. 25, 27 ; P. A. Sorokin *Social and Cultural Dynamics* (New York, 1937), III, 140-143 ; Hegel, *Th Philosophy of Right*, section 355 says with reference to the oriental world-historical realm :—"The world-view of this first (Oriental) realm is substantial, without inward division, and it arises in natural communities patriarchically governed. According to this view, the mundane form of government is theocratic, the ruler is also a high priest or God himself ; constitution and legislation are at the same time religion, while religious and moral commands, or usages rather, are at the same time natural and positive law. In the magnificence of this regime as a whole, individual personality loses its rights and perishes; the external world of nature is either directly divine or else God's ornament, and the history of the actual is poetry. Distinctions are developed in customs, government, and state on their many sides, and in default of laws and amidst the simplicity of manners, they become unwieldy, diffuse, and superstitious ceremonies, the accidents of personal power and arbitrary rule, and class differences become crystallized into hereditary castes. Hence in the Oriental state nothing is fixed, and what is stable is fossilized ; it lives therefore only in an outward movement which becomes in the end an elemental fury and desolation. Its inner calm is merely the calm of non political life and immersion in feebleness and exhaustion."

[3] The reference in the Aitareya Brahmana, vii, 27, and the Arthasastra of Kautilya to the humiliation of Janamejaya by the Brahmins would not prove the existence of theocracy.

and administering the kingdom in accordance with the dictates of canon law. The Brahmins as a class never enjoyed supreme political power. Their power was confined to being appointed as ministers. It is true that they wielded some political influence[1] because they educated the royal prince, still in view of the fact that there was no established church, no pope, no centralized temple, no institution of prophets, we cannot speak of theocracy in ancient India. There were no instances of priest-kings in ancient India unlike Egypt and Babylonia. Ancient India presents no spectacle like those of the Hebrew Theocracy, Islamic Caliphate or Calvin's rule in Geneva. Individual Brahmins obtained political offices but Brahmins as a group never enjoyed supreme political power in ancient India.

Some confusion has often been generated by the fact that scholars have not carefully looked into the differences between historical and theoretical works. Books that are normative and didactic in character have been considered to yield genuine facts of history. It is true that in the Brahmanas as well as in Manu we find exalted claims to power of the Brahmins but we have to guard against two misconceptions. Both the Brahmanas and the law-book of Manu are theoretical works and are not descriptions of concrete social practice. Moreover, even these books never contain any theory or instance of the claim of Brahmins to political superiority, The Satapatha Brahmana (v.1.1.12) also says : "To the king doubtless belongs the Rajasuya; for by offering the Rajasuya he becomes king, and unsuited for kingship is the Brahmana." It is true that the Brahmins claimed to be "gods of earth," but in spite of all vaunted claims they remained both in theory and practice advisors, councillors or at best ministers, but they never claimed to be the supreme decision-makers in things political.[2] Furthermore, a supreme handicap on the exercise of autonomous political power by the Brahmins was that they had no independent source of revenue. Financially they were dependent the king and other landed and commercial leaders. Thus it was not possible to galvanize any strong front for purposes of acquiring political power or organizing effective political resistance.

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[1] Keith, *Cambridge History of India*, i, 95 : "The Vedic Purohita was the forerunner of the Brahmana statesman.... there is no reason to doubt that a Visvamitra or a Vasistha was a most important element of the government of the early Vedic realm'.

[2] For the position and status of the Brahmins according to the Jatakas, Richard Fick, *The Social Organisation in North India*, pp. 180-250.

The Kshatriyas came next to the Brahmins in the social scale.[1] According to political thinkers the king was always to come from the Kshatriya caste. This theory could not always work in practice.[2] The Nanda rulers of ancient India had a great stigma attached to them because they came from the Sudra or the lowest social order. To which caste did the Mauryas belong is still doubtful. According to Divyavadan Bindusar and Asoka were Kshatriyas. But this myth of the Kshatriya origin of kings has always been powerful in India and when foreign conquerors came to India they all got attached to them the pedigree derivable from some ancient Kshatriya hero.

We would not say much about the Vaisyas and the Sudras because there is not much reference to them in works of political philosophy. Kautilya favours a village settlement where there would be many Vaisya agriculturists and Sudra labourers. In Manu the Sudras are referred to only as agricultural laborers but in Kautilaya they are both agricultural and industrial labourers. But we must mention one point about the Vaisyas and the Sudras. There are both historical and theoretical references to groups, corporations and guilds of workers in ancient Indian literature and inscriptions and they had an important influence on the development of institutional and corporate life.[1] They formed some sort of locally autonomous associations and were a counterpoise to political absolutism. Preponderantly these guilds and economic groupings would be composed of the Vaisyas and Sudras.

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[1] Richard Fick, *op. cit.*, on the basis of the Jatakas says :, "The *khattiyas* are the representatives of political power ; they symbolise the idea of a community which stands above the family, above the caste, the idea namely of the state....... The *khattiyas* of ancient times formed, in my opinion, like the dynasties of princes in other lands, a class by themselves, a class with only this difference, that it acquired in India to a greater extent than elsewhere the character of a caste or rather gradually acquired in course of times this character."

[2] In the Chandogya Upanishad iv, 2, 1-5, King Janasruti Pautrayana is called a Sudra. The medieval interpreters of the Brahma-sutra are desperately busy putting a scholastic interpretation upon this. In the S. B., xiii, 5, 4, 6, King Marutta Avikshita is called Ayogava which signifies a person of mixed caste.

From the works of Kautilya and Manu it appears that the caste system was growing to be an extremely complicated social structure. As a form of social organization the caste system has been variously interpreted.[2] It is considered to be an accommodation group harmonizing social tensions.[3] Some interpret it as a system of social relationships based on superiority and subordination.[4] Hindu writers tend to give an organic interpretation of the caste and view it as a cooperative and not as a competitive institution.[5] The caste never became a political association, it always remained a social grouping.[1]

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[1] R. C. Majumdar, *Corporate Life in Ancient India* (Calcutta, 1919); R. K. Mookerji, *Local Government in Ancient India* (Oxford, 1919); Benoy Sarkar, *op. cit.*; The Hathigumpha inscription of Kharvela, *Epigraphica India*, vol. xx., E. W. Hopkins, *India Old and New*, p. 169; Richard Fick, *The Social Organisation in North-East India*, pp. 267-285.

[2] Jacob Burkchardt, *Force and Freedom* (New York, 1943), p. 171, considers the institution of the caste to be the strongest negation of individuality. According to Bougle there are three characteristics of castes :

(i) hereditary specialization
(ii) hierarchic organization
(iii) mutual exclusion

According to A. L. Kroeber, "Caste", *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, the caste is "an endogamous and hereditary subdivision of an ethnic unit, occupying a position of superior or inferior rank of social esteem, in comparison with other such subdividions".

[3] Robert E. Park and E. W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (Chicago, 1921), p. 50.

[4] Max Weber, *Essay in Sociology* (New York, 1946), pp. 396-99.

[5] S. Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu View of Life*. (London, 1928), p. 93; Cf. Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle*, pp. 6-7 : "the Vedic institution of the fourfold order, caturvarna, miscalled the system of the four castes—for caste is a conventional varna, a symbolic and typal institution. (Sri Aurobindo is using here the terminology of the German historian Karl Lamprecht). We are told that the institution of the four orders of society was the result of an economic revolution complicated by political casuses. Very possibly, but the important point is that it was not so regarded and could not be so regarded by the men of that age. For while we are satisfied when we have found the practical and material causes of a social phenomenon and do not care to look farther, they cared little or only subordinately for its material factors and looked always first and foremost for its symbolic, religious or psychological significance. This appears in the Purusha-Sukta of the Veda where the four orders are described as having sprung from the body of the creative Deity, from his head, arms, thighs and feet. To us this is merely a poetical image and its sense is that the Brahmins were the men of knowledge, the Kshatriyas the men of power, the Vaishyas the producers and support of society, the Shudras its servants.

We shall discuss now the political effects of the caste system. The most important result perhaps was that the monopolistic caste system led to the increase of royal power and this was achieved in three ways : (1) the destruction of the national Samiti of olden times, (2) the destruction of the economic guilds,[2] (3) the use of the priesthood for suppressing the other groups that could together have formed an aristocratic opposition.[3] The assembly of old was gradually being replaced by the council of ministers. Side by side, groupings of castes were coming into importance and caste representation was advocated by the Mahabharata in the formation of kingly council. The caste system was based on the concept of social distance and social sanction for the infringement of caste laws and hence due to lack of political fraternisation a united front could not be presented to the holders of political power.[4] For this same reason—maintenance of social distances—

....Human society was for them an attempt to express in life the cosmic Purusha who has expressed himself otherwise in the material and the supraphysical universe. Man and the cosmos are both of them symbols and expressions of the same hidden Reality." Contrast, R. P. Masani, "caste and the structure of society", *The Legacy or India* (Oxford, 1937), P. 151 : "The system was a compromise between individualism and collectivism, between unrestrained competition and constrained co-operation. It has even been described as 'ancient time-tasted scientific socialism' (Bhagwan Das, *Ancient versus Modern Scientific Socialism*), maintaining the balance of power between the vocational classes."

[1] Weber, *op. cit*, pp. 398-399.

[2] According to Joseph Dahlmann the guild system is an institution characteristic of the Indo-European-speaking peoples. He is of the opinion that the caste is a guild which has become solidified. Bougle has denied this view and says that if Dahlmann's view were true then every profession should correspond to a caste.

[3] Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 404-5 ; Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 325.

[4] Weber, *op. cit.*, pp. 402, 404 ; Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*, p. 206 says : 'There is a conspicuous difference, in realation to the principle of particularity and the subject's arbitrary will, between the political life of the east and the west, and also between that of the ancient and the modern world. In the former, the division of the whole into classes came about objectively of itself, because it is inherently rational ; but the principle of subjective particularity was at the same time denied its rights in that, for example, the allotment of individuals to classes was left to the ruling class, as a in Plato's *Republic*, or to the accident of birth, as in the Indian caste-system."

the caste system destroyed the economic guilds or at least prevented their growth into a political opposition.

The caste system had another political consequence also. It prevented the emergence of the conception of political individualism. It is true that individualism is a modern conception. It has received strength from the immense growth of capitalist commodity production which shattered the old economic fetters imposed by feudalism and serfdom. The Reformation which championed the cause of individual conscience against the claims of papal supremacy in the field of Biblical interpretation also added to the force of growing political individualism. The theory of natural right further substantiated political individualism form the theoretical standpoint. In ancient Greece we had only rudimentary beginnings of humanistic individualism in Protagoras and egoistic individualism in Epicurus. A few sophists like Hippias tried to demolish the foundations of established law. Even Socrates confined his attacks to traditional moral pieties and did not challange the system of law and politics. Thus it is evident that the absence of political individualism in ancient India should not appear surprising because the concept of the autonomous significance and political rights of the individual versus the state or versus the society is a modern development. Nevertheless, it must be stated that the firmly entrenched caste structure was the greatest bulwark of a conservative corporativism and even vague, elementary, and undeveloped conceptions of individual rights versus that state did not emerge in ancient India.

Before we finish the subject of social structure in India we should mention another characteristic Indian social institution —the Ashrama—meaning order or stage of life.[1] The division into four castes was to a great degree a concrete reality, although we find that from the Vedic times onwards there were innumerable subdivisions but each of them could be put in some one of the four big divisions. Contrasted with the caste, the Ashrama more or less represented an ideal.[1] Its theory became formulated in the later Vedic age. It tried to divide the life of an orthodox Aryan into four divisions.[2] The life-span was counted as one hundred years. Out of this the first twenty-five years were to be spent as a Brahmacarin[3]—a Vedic student leading an austere life (The Atharvaveda XI, 5). The next twenty-five years were for household enjoyments and public duties. The years from the fifty-first to the seventy-fifth were to be devoted to meditation and study. After seventy-five came the stage of Sannyasa—total renunciation of all attachments and possessions and leading the life of a wandering ascetic. The Sannyasi is the ideal of a Hindu—completely self-possessed, one who has finished all his public and social duties and is at one with the centre of spiritual energy. He is to teach and educate his fellowmen in the paths of virtue and is unbound by any social conventions or traditions.[4] We shall find that in all the works of Hindu political thought—Kautilya's Arthasastra, Manu's lawbook and the

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[1] According to Winternitz the word Ashrama is derived from the root *sram*, and originally meant the religious fervour and efforts of hermits and ascetics.

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[1] Cf., Paul Deussen, *The Philosophy of the Upanishads* (Edinburgh, 1919), p. 397 ; "These four life-stages of the Brahman—as student, householder, anchorite and wandering beggar—in which according to a subsequent view the life of every Indian Brahman should be spent were at a later time very significantly named Asramas, i.e. 'places of mortification' (First as far as our knowledge goes, in the Atyasramin of Svet. 6, 21, followed by Maitr. 4,3, etc.). The whole life should be passed in a series of gradually intensifying ascetic stages, through which a man, more and more purified from all earthly attachment, should become fitted for his 'home' (*Astam*), as the other world is designated as early as the R. V. x, 14, 8. The entire history of mankind does not produce much that approaches in grandeur to this thought." Perhaps the social utilitarian, the societarian collectivist, the hedonist and others who take a relativistic view of ethics would not concur with Deussen's praise of an intuitional ethic primarily oriented to a metaphysic of absolutism.

[2] त्रयो धर्मस्कन्धा यज्ञोऽध्ययनं दानमिति प्रथमस्तप एव—C. U. ii, 23.

पुत्रैषणायाश्च वित्तैषणायाश्च लोकैषणायाश्च व्युत्थायाथ भिक्षाचर्य्यं चरन्ति ।
—B. A. U. vii, 2.

[3] Sometimes the word Antevasin is also used to designate the Brahmacari, S. B. v, 1. 5, 17 ; B. A. U. vi, 3. 7 ; T. U. i, 3, 3. For details about ancient Indian education, S. V. Venkateswara, *Indian Culture Through the Ages* (London, 1938), vol. i.

[4] Manusmriti, vi, 68 :—

संरक्षणार्थं जन्तूनां रात्रावहनि वा सदा ।
शरीरस्यात्यये चैव समीक्ष्य वसुधां चरेत् ।

According to the Svetasvatara Upanishad the Sannyasi is beyond the Ashramas. According to the later Upanishads a person could directly become a Sannyasi without being an anchorite.

Mahabharata—there are discussions of these four Ashrmas. But actually, only the householders are to be affected by public and political obligations since the other three orders do not hold private property, do not produce any wealth and are not available for public office.[1] According to the Manusmriti the householder is declared to be the superior to all the Ashramas because he supports the other three (बिभर्ति). "As all rivers, both great and small, find a resting-place in the ocean, even so men of all orders find protection with householders (सर्वे गृहस्थे यान्ति संस्थितम्)".

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[1] तेषां गृहस्थो योनिरप्रजनत्वादितरेषाम् ।—Gautama Dharmasutra iii, 3.

Chapter II

BASIC CONCEPTS OF HINDU POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

1. INTRODUCTION

There are two types of literary sources in ancient India from which we obtain ideas about political problems and matters. The Vedas, the Upanishads and the philosophical systems provided incidentally some significant political concepts but their fundamental orientation is towards theology, religion and philosophy. But the Arthasastra and the Dharmasastra literature deals more intensively and systematically with political problems and theories of administration. In the Santiparva of the Mahabharata we find political realism and speculative idealism of an advanced level. But although in ancient and medieval India there was a continuing tradition of speculation regarding politics and administration, we find that we do not have as many magnificent productions in political thought in India as in ancient and medieval Europe. Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, John of Salisbury, Aquinas, Dante, Marsiglio of Padua and William Wycliffe produced big and powerful treatises in the field of political philosophy. In ancient and medieval India we have only two monumental productions in politics—the Arthasastra of Kautilya and the Santiparva. This is rather a slender achievement for the powerful Hindu mind which has tremendous productions to its credit in the field of literature and philosophy. This is an intriguing situation and demands an answer. One can never be categorical in providing such answers. However, it appears that possibly the special field in which the creative exuberance of the ancient Hindus manifested itself was not political science but logic, philosophy and theology. This may be due to the fact that probably in the Hindu scheme of theoretical evaluation, political sciences did not appear as important as some of the other sciences. It is also possible that the ancient Hindus thought that political matter required not so much of utopian and idealistic theoretical construction as a pragmatic and practical handling and hence even in the Arthasastra and the Santiparva, what is uppermost is not the rational creation of a theory of state and law as a theory of monarchical administration. A second factor to explain the comparative paucity of advanced theoretical literature in the field of ancient Hindu political science might have been the absence of diverse types of polities in ancient India. Certainly for some periods of Indian history we find edvidences of the existence of republics, but fundamentally monarchy established in the framework of the fourfold or more castes was the predominant pattern. Hence that theoretical interest in the relative merits and demerits of different types of polities which has been a significant factor in the growth of western political theory was not present in India. The existence of Athenian democracy and Spartan oligarchy side by side produced the background of a lot of political thinking in Greece. If to the Magadhan monarchical imperialism there would have been offered as competitor a republican polity of equal vitality and historical continuity then perhaps a lot of political speculation would have been generated. Perhaps a third factor could also be pointed out to explain the relative absence of serious works of political thought. The vast size of the Indian sub-continent in the days of undeveloped communication did not make possible the density and immensity of political experience which is essential for keen political investigations. Except for occasional warfare the main social experience that presented itself to the thinkers and to the people related not to politics but to the caste system. Hence the urgency and the immediacy of the political problems which could generate serious political theorising was not acute in ancient India. But it spite of these limiting factor we find that in the field of political philosophy Hindu thinkers did formulate and develop some important political concepts.

Some of the fundamental concepts and ideas in the realm of Hindu political philosophy were formulated not by political writers but by metaphysicians and philosophers. When the latter had given those concepts a broad and rich content, the former incorporated them in their own works. Such a process can also be detected in the history of western political thought, in the development of such concepts as virtue, right, the ideal life, truth, liberty, etc.[1]

2. *THE CONCEPTS OF BRAHMAN AND KSHATRA IN THE VEDIC LITERATURE*

Due to impact of science on modern thought we find in modern social sciences a quest for rigidly and precisely defined concepts which become the basis for the advance of the several disciplines. But in ancient India we find that the separation of disciplines had not proceeded very far. In the Vedas, in the Mahabharata and in the Manusmriti we find a comprehensive theoretical and historical discussion and description of numerous topics. Hence although we come across political discussions and speculations in them they pertain more to the realm of political philosophy than to that of scientific politics. In the ancient Hindu works on political thought we find that political matters are treated as a part of human activities and hence are integrally connected with the problems of human destiny and moral and spiritual values. Ancient Hindu writers attempt to discuss problems of politics and administration as interlinked with the intimate problems of human origins and cosmic processes. Hence to them problems of the foundations and justification of political action and its meaning in the context of the community structure are more significant that the definition of the dynamics of citizenship, of the positivistic approach to law or the growth of the state as a public service corporation. Hence in the study of ancient Hindu political thought we have to appreciate the comprehensive philosophical and religious approach of the writers. Only with the growth of the Arthasastra literature we get an intensive and realistic discussion of the problems of diplomacy and administration. But some of the dominant religious and philosophical conceptions of ancient times continue to influence even the works belonging to the Arthasaṣtra tradition.

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[1] The subject of the religious and philosophic origin of some of the dominant concepts of western political science has been dealt with profoundly and at great length by Nicolas Berdyaev in several of his writings, especially, *The Origin of Russian Communism*, *The Meaning of History*, *The Russian Idea* etc. Hegel also discussed this problem with special reference to the concept of freedom in the early portions of *The Philosophy of Right*.

The Vedas are the earliest and one of the most important books in Hindu thought. Primarily they are hymns of prayer to gods. Incidentally they also give us an idea of the society, polity and economic conditions of the times. More and more, scholars are recognizing their great influence on later philosophy. So far as political philosophy is concerned the Vedas provide us with the notions of Brahma[1] and Kshatra.[2] Since the Vedic times till Mahatma Gandhi, Hindu thinkers have debated upon the problem of the relative superiority of spiritual and physical powers. The individual person was a complex of the body and the soul. The body signified physical powers and the soul stood for spiritual powers. The problem was which one of them should an individual try to develop and which should be given social recognition. During the age of the Vedas and the Brahmanas the problem was debated,[3] but with the advance of the Upanishadic metaphysics and the Buddhist notions of Nirvana, decided preference began to be shown not for the militaristic and physical aspects of life but for the meditative, absorptive and spiritual. The Hindu thinkers have been greatly concerned with the problem of salvation. The world meant for them a prison and it was essential to obtain salvation from its clutches and fetters. Even when great empires arose and big economic organizations were erected, the conscience of the majority of thinkers ascribed supremacy to the spiritual sense of right and values.

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[1] According to Haug, Brahma signifies prayer. Rudolf Roth holds that originally Brahma meant the volitional energy directed towards the gods, then it meant a religious word and finally indicated the Absolute. According to Max Muller. *Six Systems of Indian Philosophy*, pp. 68 ff., Brahma denotes what grows, from वृह which means to grow. Deussen, *Allgemeine Geschichteder Philosophie,* I, i, 305 ff. interprets the word Brahma to mean the human will in its striving to attain the absolute, when the aspirant in prayer returns to his self which transcends space and time.

For the sake of simplicity, I have used the form Brahma and not the form Brahman. For the same reason I have used the form Karma and not Karman.

[2] "Ksatra, in the general sence of dominion, rule, power as exercised by gods and men, occurs frequently form the Rigveda onwards. The word is also found in the concrete sense of 'rulers' in the Rigveda and later, but in no case does it in the Rigveda certainly mean what it regularly denotes in the later Samhitas, the ruling class as opposed to the priests, the subject people and the servile class. A ksatra-pati is several times mentioned as an equivalent of King." *Vedix Index*, i, 202.

[3] Alfred Bertholet, "Priesthood," *The Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences,* ed. by Seligman, XIII, 391, is mistaken in thinking that the Brahma and the Kshatra separation of the Vedas is artificial.

The Vedas and the Brahmanas posed the problem very simply. What should be the relation between Brahma and Kshatra ?[1] In the Brahmanas there was the tendency to identify the Brahmin caste as symbolizing the Brahma power and the Kshatriya caste the Khsatra power. But this caste-wise representation was not supposed to be rigid.[2] A Kshatriya could develop his spiritual powers and by the realization of the self and the spiritual absolute could attain spiritual worth. On the other hand if a Brahmin so liked, he could take to the development of Kshatriya or Kshatra capacities. Some gifted individuals like Rama or Krishna are credited in the ancient literature with having both the powers developed. But although this notion of the two powers had its genesis in the dual component of the individual human person, still as we see in the conception of the Brahmin and the Kshatriya castes, the problem was also visualized and understood on the social level. Kautilya conceives of the acceleration of the Kshatra power by the Brahmin group as leading to the conquest of the unconquerable.[3]

[1] क्षत्रं वै बृहत्क्षत्रेणैव तत्क्षत्रं समर्धयत्यथो क्षत्रं वै बृहदात्मा……।
ब्रह्म वै रथन्तरं क्षत्रं बृहद् ब्रह्मणि खलु वै क्षत्रं प्रतिष्ठितं क्षत्रं ब्रह्म ॥ ब्रह्मण एव तत्क्षत्रं वशमेति तद्यत्र वै ब्रह्मणः क्षत्रं वशमेति तद्राष्ट्रं समृद्धं तद्वीरवदाहास्मिन् वीरो जायते—A. B. viii, 6, 9.

क्षत्रं वै स्विष्टकृत् । क्षत्रं वै साम ।—S. B. xii, 8, 2.

[2] ब्रह्म वै ब्राह्मणः क्षत्रं राजन्यस्तदस्य ब्रह्मणा च क्षत्रेण चोभयतः श्रीः परिगृहीता भवति । युद्धं वै राजन्यस्य वीर्य्यम् । S. B. xiii, 1, 5. R. V. iv, 12, 3 ; 42, i ; v, 69, 1 ; in these hymns the word Ksatriya is exclusively connected with royal authority or Divine authority—*Vedic Index*, i, 203.

[3] Arthasastra, i, 9, :

ब्राह्मणेनैधितं क्षत्रं मन्त्रिमन्त्राभिमन्त्रितम् ।
जयत्यजितमत्यन्तं शास्त्रानुगतशस्त्रितम् ॥

The concept of Brahma grew in the Vedas and culminated in the Upanishads and Vedanta where it meant the absolute, the great, and signified the one essence of the diverse pluralistic becoming.[1] But in the Vedas Brahma stood for the notion of magical force[2] derived from the orderly cooperation of the hymns, the chants and the sacrificial gifts. Perhaps the idea of Brahma, holy power or mysterious power grew out of the apprehension of an all-pervasive force behind the things of the world. This notion of power or force or lustre or vigour behind Brahma, is very significant and the Upanishadic seers did not lose sight of it even when the Brahma as the absolute was conceived to be the being identical with truth, gnosis and bliss. The utter and supreme significance of metaphysical spiritualism and idealism begins in Indian thought from the Upanishads. There were a few streams of materialistic and vitalistic thought but the quest of the infinite and cosmic spirit was the dominant concern of the Hindu mind. This trend retarded the application of the abstract and rational intellect to the building of systematic theories about the state and society. The greatest minds of India applied themselves not to political philosophy and sociology but to the problems of the Sachchhidananda, Isvara, Atman, Jiva and Mukti. Nature was regarded in the Vedantic thought as the visible self-power of the Brahman. When Brahma was conceived as the creator of the empirical universe he was supposed to work with his self-energized power of Maya or Avidya or Sakti—power.[4] This idea of the power of the absolute being had a profound influence on Hindu political thought and practice. It imparted the predominant note of spirituality to Hindu thought. In the writings ofthe ancient Hindus we get a religious profundity and spiritual devoutness which we get only to some extent in the Bible and nowhere else. This stress on spirituality is a matter of the acceptance by the intellectual leaders of the community of the significance of the cosmic and the transcendent in human life. It amounts to a minimization of the importance of the materialistic and secularistic entities. The Upanishads had taught that the man who knows the Brahma becomes the Brahma and has complete sway over whatsoever he desires. Hence we find that the Hindu kings are always admonished to devote a part of their time to contemplating this being. Therefore we should not be surprised to find that even an arch-defender of monarchical power, Kautilya, asserts that the royal prince should be initiated in the disciplines teaching union with the absolute and knowledge of the true human self. Thus it is apparent that the spiritual and religious orientation that was imparted to Hindu thought by the Vedas and the Upanishads continued to be a dominant force even when the country advanced politically and big empires were being built. Even the upholders of monarchical imperialism on the social and political plane always maintained the significance of the transcendent spiritual and religious values as providing the meaning and the purpose of human life. Thus a fundamental conception of Hindu political thought is that before one can conquer others and obtain obedience from them he has to conquer his own self.

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[1] R. V., viii, 3, 91; Yajurveda, xxx, 2. Henceforward the abbreviated form V. S. will stand for the Yajurveda.

[2] उद्गा आजद् अभिनद् ब्रह्मणा वलम् । अगूह्त्तमो व्यचक्षयत् स्वः ।

—R. V. ii, 24,3.

Oldenberg, *Weltanschauung der Brahmanatexte*, pp. 49 ff. denied that in the Veda there esxists either the idea or the word for a supernatural Power encompassing the world.

[3] Commenting upon the Vedantasutra सर्वधर्मोपपत्तेश्च, ii, 1, 37, Samkara says : यस्मादस्मिन्ब्रह्मणि कारणे परिगृह्यमाने प्रदर्शितेन प्रकारेण सर्वे कारणधर्मा उपपद्यन्ते । 'सर्वज्ञं सर्वशक्ति महामायं च ब्रह्म' इति । Also A. V., x, 54, 2 ; vi, 47, 18; iv, 16, 9.

Shri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, I, 222, translates the Chit-Tapas or Chit-Shakti of the Vedanta with consciousness-force.

The predominant emphasis on the spiritual and idealistic approach to reality generated the conception of man as spirit. According to the Vedantic view, man is not a mechanical or vital being. The physical and the vital and even the mental and the cognitional intellectual aspects are only bases and foundations for the manifestation of the creative potency of the spiritual essence. Man is a divine spark, whose spiritual vision has been clouded by the blinding power of ignorance. Once the mask and veil of ignorance has been rent as under the spirit in man will shine in all resplendence. In view of the tremendous significance of the Vedanta in Hindu India, the Vedantic conception of man as a spiritual essence exerted enormous political influence.

The word Kshatra or Kshatrasri or the lustre of Kshatra, is found in the Vedas.[1] Keith translates this word by sovereignty.[2] We can accept this translation provided we understand this word in the general sense of power and do not read into it the abstract legal concept of an ultimate irresistible power of the political head as found in Bodin, Hobbes, Rousseau and Austin. We shall say more about this concept of sovereignty later on. Eggeling identified Kshatra with the abstract ruling power. Kshatra in some passages of the Taittiriya Samhita and the Taittiriya Brahmana corresponds to Rajanya or the Kshatriya caste.[3] Generally speaking, in later Hindu thought the word Kshatra lost its abstract conceptual character and tended more and more to be identified with the natural qualities of the Kshatriya caste. It never attained the exalted height which the concept of Brahma attained when it came to signify the absolute. Perhaps this tendency gives evidence of the predominant spiritual character of Hindu thought. The Satapatha Brahmana says that although Kshatra and Brahma are interdependent, the Brahmin who represents the Brahma can do without Kshatra but not vice versa.[4] According to the Aitareya Brahmana, in course of the Punarabhiseka ceremony, the king descends from the throne and makes obeisance to the Brahman and says : "verily thus the kingly power (Kshatra) falls under the influence of the holy power (Brahman). When the kingly power falls under the influence of the holy power that kingdom is prosperous, rich in heroes, in it a hero is born." This notion of the Brahma and Kshatra we consider to be one of the basic contributions of the Vedas and the Brahmanas to Hindu thought.[1] Since the Vedas and Brahmanas are books on theology, ritual and philosophy, our generalization about the origin of some of the basic political concepts in non-political works is substantiated. The concept of Dharma further corroborates our statement.

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[1] राजा राष्ट्राणाम् पेशो नदीनामनुत्तमस्मै क्षत्रं विश्वायु, R. V. vii, 34, 11 ; R. V., 1, 24, 6 ; iv, 17, 1 ; v, 62, 6. Kshatra (ruler or dominion) has the same meaning in the Avesta and the Persian inscriptions.

[2] Arthur Berriedale Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads* (Cambridge, Mass., 1925), p. 96.

[3] T. S., i, 8, 9, 1 ; T. B., i, 7, 3, 3.

ब्रह्म वै ब्राह्मणः क्षत्रं राजन्यस्तदस्य ब्रह्मणा च क्षत्रेण चोभयतः श्री परिगृहीता भवति । युद्धं वै राजन्यस्य वीर्यम् । S. B. xii, 1, 5, 11. राजन्य एव शौर्यं महिमानं दधाति तस्मात्पुरा राजन्यः शूर इषव्योऽतिव्याधी महारथो जज्ञे ।

S. B., xiii, 1. 9. 2.

[4] S. B., iv, 1. 4. 6.

3. *THE CONCEPT OF ARTHA IN KAUTILYA'S ARTHASASTRA*

We shall deal with the political ideas of the Upanishads, the Pali-Buddhist literature and the Dharmasutras later on. Here we shall discuss the two concepts most emphasized by Kautilya —Artha and Danda. The Arthasastra of Kautilya is decidedly the most important work in Hindu political thought.[2] The book refers to numerous previous teachers[3] and claims to be a systematic compendium of the ancient teachings. Kautilya makes no pretense for the construction of any original system of political philosophy. The great significance of this work lies not in the philosophical analysis of the ultimate problems of legal and political thought. The writer is not interested in presenting the architectonic of the rationally perfect and ideal polity. The supreme significance of this work lies in being the systematic epitomization and constructive synthesis of the political ideas and notions available in those days. Winternitz upheld that the writer of the Arthaśāstra was not a great stateman but a Pandit. But E. H. Johnson remarks : "If it is wrong on the one hand to read into the Arthaśāstra the ideas of a great statesman or a deep political thinker, on the other hand half its value is missed by treating it as the pedantic theorisings of a Pandita." The authenticity of the book had long been a controversial issue among Indologists but Jayaswal and Jacobi have strongly pleaded that the work is a genuine treatise written by Kautilya, the prime minister of King Chandragupta.[1]

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[1] *Ibid.*, iv, 1, 1-4. Cf. Gautama's Dharmasutras xi, 27 ; xi, 14 ; Cf., V. S. xx, 25 :

यत्र ब्रह्म च क्षत्रं च सम्यञ्चौ चरतः सह तं लोकं पुण्यं प्रज्ञेषं यत्र देवाःसहाग्निना ॥

[2] In the Mudrarākshasa of Vishakhadatta Kautilya has been recognised as आकरः सर्वशास्त्राणां राजानामिव सागरः। The author of the Lankavatarasutra salutes Kautilya as a Rishi. Dandi, the writer of the Dasakumarcharita in the second part of the book refers to Acharya Visnugupta in the most laudatory terms. He says : अधीष्व तावद्दण्डनीतिम् । इयम् इदानीमाचार्यं विष्णुगुप्तेन मौयार्थे षड्भिः श्लोकसहस्रैः संक्षिप्ता । सैवेयमधीत्य सम्यगनुष्ठीयमाना यथोक्तकार्यक्षमेति । Bana the great author of the Kadambari also knows of Kautilya but he is critical of the author's political thought. Bana says : किं वा तेषां सांप्रतम् । येषामतिनृशंसप्रायोपदेशनिर्घृणं कौटिल्यशास्त्रं प्रमाणम् ।

[3] Kautilya mentions the names of several teachers like Visalaksha, Parashara, Bahudantiputra, Kinjalka, Katyayana, Bharadvaja, Dirghacharayana, Pisuna, Ghotamukha, Kaunapadanta, Pisuna-putra. He refers to the schools of Manavas, Ambhiyas, Barhaspatyas and Ausanasas.

The intellectual atmosphere when Kautilya wrote was one of tremendous philosophical and social ferment.[2] The old Upanishadic absolutism and the ritualistic cult of the Vedic priests had been challenged by the rise of sceptics, atheists and nihilists—the "Six Tirthaka Teachers."[3] The old religious tradition was on the defensive and the great Kalpasutra works had been trying to defend the Vedic domestic and sacrificial rituals. The Carvaka School of materialistic thinkers sought to pulverize the whole moral code and there was nothing substantial in their social teachings except a sensational notion of self-enjoyment. Kautilya began his work when these tendencies were contesting with each other in the philosophical world. He does not follow the method of detailed exposition of any topic in the dialogue from which we find in the Pali Tripitakas. Instead he follows the older Brahmanical way of writing short aphoristic sentences. Hence, although his book is very extensive we do not get the feeling of being at home in it which we find in the Upanishads or in the Tripitakas or in Plato's *Republic*. We shall give a short account of the times when Kautilya wrote.

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[1] Sten Konow, *Kautalya Studies* (Oslo, 1945), p. 65; Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, pp. 203-219 ; for a different view, Arthur B. Keith, "The Authenticity of the Arthasastra." *Sir Ashutosh Memorial Volume* (Patna, 1926-28), pp. 8-22 ; According to Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Literature*, iii, 509 ff., the work belongs to the 3rd cent. A. D., while Jolly, *Punjab Sanskrit Series*, No. 4 (1923) holds that it is work of the 4th cent. A. D.

[2] Jacobi, *Die Entwicklung der Gottesidee beiden Indern*, p. 41, n. 1, shows the connection of the text of the Arthasastra with Jainism. This concurs with his opinion about the temporal synchronism of the redaction of the Jaina canon and the Arthasastra.

Jacobi infers that the Samkhya and Yoga systems, the Purva Mimansa and the sensationalistic materialism of the Lokayata were in existence in the fourth century B. C.

[3] Samjaya Belatthaputta, Nigganth Nataputta, Pakudha Kaccayana, Makkhali Gosala, Ajit Kesakambali and Purana Kassapa.

In the pre-Kautilyan era political power had been quite dispersed among a large number of republican and monarchical states. When Kautilya was writing, with the growth of the Magadhan imperialism, power was largely concentrated in the hands of the king of Magadha.[1] The concept of the Samrat which is found in the Rigveda and the Aitareya Brahmana and the term Cakravarti (the king whose chariot has unhindered march), which we find in the Buddhist literature, had now become a concrete reality, and hence, when Kautilya began his work his mind was impressed with the ideals of an exalted kingship and throughout his work we find the tendency to think of the king as the most important factor in the realm. He was writing his work at a time when the memories of the previous political disorders due to the disintegration of the republican states in the Panjab and the battle between Chadragupta and the Nandas, were still fresh in his mind and hence he put great insistence on the necessity of a strong royal power as the only guarantee against the resurgence of the state of anarchy. The rise of the monastic ethical systems of Jainism and Buddhism had not only produced anti-Vedic thoughts but sought to destroy social cohesion by exalting asceticism and renunciation of home life. Hence Kautilya had to support the established royal power as the factor which could prevent social disorganization. Kautilya advocated the traditional ideal of Varnashrama. He was an opponent of the exaltation of the ascetic and monastic life because the generalisation of the latter would lead to social disruption. If a person, wihout providing for wife and children would take up the path of renunciation, Kautilya prescribes punishment for him. A similar sanction was to be imposed on any body who converts a women to asceticism. A person who had passed beyond the age of reproduction could embrace the monastic life after consulting the judges. Kautilya forbids the entrance into the Janapadas of any ascetic other than a Vanaprastha, any company other than the one of local birth and guilds of any kind other than local cooperative guilds (वानप्रस्थादन्यः प्रव्रजितभावः सजातादन्यः संघः सामुत्थायिकादन्यः समयानुबन्धो वा नास्यजनपदमुपनिविशेत्). In the realm of economics, trade with foreign countries had increased.[1] The establishment of the power of the Mauryas led to a great exploitation of natural resources and agriculture and industry greatly developed.

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[1] Monahan, *Early History of Bengal*, p. 31, holds that Kautilya wrote this book before the creation of the empire of Candragupta.

This background of the intellectual, political and economic developments would help us to understand the philosophy of Kautilya. "The book is called Arthasastra or the treatise on Artha—wealth. This Arthasastra is made as a compendium of almost all the Arthasastras, which, in view of acquisition and maintenance of the earth, have been composed by ancient teachers.[2] The subsistence of mankind is termed artha, wealth, the earth which contains mankind is termed artha, wealth ; that science which treats of the means of acquiring and maintaining the earth is the Arthasastra (science of polity).[3] Thus, this Sastra—is composed as a guide to acquire and secure this and the other world. In the light of this Sastra one cannot only set on foot righteous, economical and aesthetical acts and maintain them, but also put down unrighteous, uneconomical and displeasing acts. This Sastra has been made by him who from intolerance (of misrule) quickly rescued the scriptures and the science of weapons and the earth which had passed to the Nanda king'.[1] In emphasizing the notion of the acquisition and preservation of territory, Kautilya is stressing an idea which was relegated to a subordinate place in the Upanishadic and the Buddhistic teachings. According to the Upanishads the desire for wealth is one of the three desires, the other two being desires for progency and fame, which have to be shunned by an aspirant after realization of ultimate truth. In Buddhism all empirical and relativistic desires have to be negated because they arise in ignorance and hence are impediments in the path of one who wants to attain Nirvana. Of course, it is true that these teachings applied not to a layman but only to an aspirant after final salvationistic knowledge, but it cannot be denied that, if not explicitly, at least very strongly in an implicit way both Buddhism and the Upanishads exalted the life of negation of wealth and political power. As a reaction against them the Carvaka School preached a gross sensationalistic materialism. But Kautilya's is the first systematic and balanced attempt to construct a philosophy exalting Artha or wealth and territory.[2]

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[1] Radhakumud Mookerjee, *Indian Shipping* (London, 1912), pp. 100ff., G. N. Banerjee, *India as Known to the Ancient World* (Oxford, 1921) pp. 1-47 ; H. G. Rawlinson, *India and the Western World*, passim.

[2] Kautilya Arthasastra, English translation by R. Shamasastry (Mysore, 1932), p. 1. Quotations in English from the Arthasastra, are from the translation by R. Shamasastry, unless indicated otherwise.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 494.

Kautilya starts from the traditional fourfold classification of the basic goals or aspirations of an individual. First, Dharma, righteous performance of one's own duties. Second, Artha, economic activities in pursuance of wealth and power. Third, Kama, sexual desires or desires as such. Fourth, Moksha, or final liberation.[3] Sometimes we have a twofold classification—

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 493. Prof. Jacobi finds in the last sentence "the proud self consciousness of a great statesman, the Indian Bismarck." V. A. Smith thinks that the Nanda king who was expropriated and executed by Chandragupta belonged to a low caste and was a heretic hostile to the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas.

[2] "It is a noticeable fact that materialism was fostered and studied in India especially in schools of political thought. Political men, men, having thus freed their conscience from every moral tie, preached a businesslike machiavellism in politics. They supported the established order and the religion upon which it was founded, without caring to be religious themselves. But not only did materialism flourish, so to speak, among the governing class of Hindu society, it also had its votaries among the popular circles". Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, Vol I, pp. 15-16.

[3] Sri Aurobindo, *The Human Cycle* (Pondichery, 1949) says; "The ancient Indian ideal recognised this truth and divided life into four essential and indispensable divisions, Artha, Kama, Dharma, Moksa, vital interests, satisfaction of desires of all kinds, ethics and religion, and liberation or spirituality, and it insisted on the practice and development of all. Still it tended not only to put the last forward as the goal of all the rest which it is, but to put it at the end of life and its habitant in another world of our being, rather than

Sreya or good and Preya or pleasant.[1] According to this scheme, Artha and Kama will be Preya and Dharma and Moksha will be Sreya.[2] Buddha distinguished two ways of life. One leads to worldly success and the other to final liberation. Kautilya accepts the fourfold (sometimes the threefold scheme is only spoken, the fourth category, Moksha, being included in Dharma) category. As a believer in traditional Hindu theology and metaphysics he does not repudiate the belief in heaven and hell and in prospects of release from worldly transmigrations. But his main task in the treatise, as he clearly says in the beginning, is to analyze the ways and means for the realization of the proximate goals of social existence. Kautilya admonishes the king to be self-restrained and to "Keep away from hurting the women and property of others." The king should avoid lustfulness, falsehood, haughtiness and evil predilections. Kautilya is an opponent of unrighteous and uneconomical transactions. But he is not a mere rigorist teaching the suppression of aesthetic and emotional longings. He preaches a philosophy of balance and harmonious integration. "The king may enjoy in an equal degree the three pursuits of life—charity, wealth and aesthetic desire, which are interdependent upon each other." Any one of these three, if indulged in an extreme degree, becomes an injurious factor. But Kautilya is cautious to add that wealth is a very significant means for the realization of Dharma and the aesthetic emotional aspects of existence. And hence he accepts the maximisation of wealth and territory. He visualized an all-Indian monarchical power[3] and since wealth is needed for power he is interested in wealth. He explicitly says that all

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here in life, as the supreme status and formative power on the physical plane. But this rules out the idea of the kingdom of God on earth, the perfectibility of society and of man in society, the evolution of a new and diviner race, and without one or other of these no universal ideal can be complete. It provides a temporary and occasional, but not an inherent justification for life ; it holds out no illumining fulfilment either for its individual or for its collective implulse".

[1] Katha Upanishad, 1, 2, 1.

[2] The Vedic words roughly signifying धन are रयि, राये, राधस, रत्न, धन, वाज, पोष, श्री etc.

[3] Arthasastra, ix, 1. p. 396.

enterprises and actions require economic means for their realization. Hence it is essential for the king to have a full treasury, otherwise he would try to devour the resources of the people. According to Kautilya the best treasury is one which has been virtuously obtained either by inheritance or through the endeavours of the monarch (धर्माधिगतः पूर्वैः स्वयं वा), rich in gold and silver, filled with abundance of big gems of various colours and gold coins and capable to withstand calamities of long duration. Not violating righteousness and economy, the king shall enjoy his desires. He shall never be devoid of happiness. He may enjoy in an equal degree the three pursuits of life, charity, wealth, and desire, which are interdependent upon each other. Any one of these three, when enjoyed to an excess hurts not only the other two, but also itself. Kautilya holds that wealth, and wealth alone, is important, inasmuch as charity and desire depend upon wealth for their realization".[1] This preponderant emphasis upon wealth[2] is also shown in Kautilya's view that a full treasury and power of punishment are needed to control one's own people and to suppress the enemy. But in spite of the importance attached to wealth in its being the root of Dharma and Kama, and in spite of the name of Kautilya's treatise, "the treatise on artha", we should not interpret him as an economic determinist. Economic determinism advocates the causal role of the economic factor both in human motivation and in social and historical eventuation. According to Kautilya the economic factor is immensely significant in social existence but still it is only one and never the sole causal category. From his general assumptions and method of investigations it appears that between the economic and the political factors he ascribes primacy to the political. He never says that Artha determines the forms and conditions of societal and political existence. Moreover, the power of punishment is not derived form Artha. But it cannot be denied that Kautilya has broadened the notion of Artha. He defines Artha as the Vriti of mankind.[1] Vriti has been translated as means. It is also translated by instinct. I think that activity will be a better translation and will be more in consonance with the dynamic notion which Kautilya had in mind.

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[1] Arthasastra, ii, 7, p. 12. Cf. Chanakya Niti Sastra, iv, 21 :
धनादिधर्मः क्रियते धनेन धनेन धन्या धनिनो भवन्ति ।
धनं विना कामकथैव नास्ति त्रिवर्गमूलं धनमेव नान्यत् ॥

[2] Cf. Brihaspati Sutra, ed. F. W. Thomas, Lahore, 1921, vi, 7-12 ;
अर्थमार्जयेत् ।
यस्यार्थराशिरस्ति तस्य मित्राणि धर्मश्च विद्याच गुणविक्रमौ च बुद्धिश्च ।
अधनेनार्थमर्जयितुं न शक्यते गजोऽगजेनेव ।
धनमूलं जगत्
सर्वाणि तत्र सन्ति ।
निर्धनोमृतश्चाण्डालश्च ।

Kautilya has a chapter entitled "Doubts About Wealth and Harm ; and Success to be Obtained by the Employment of Alternative Strategic Means".[2] He says that the wealth, which when obtained, increases the prosperity of the enemy, or which, after acquisition, is repayable to the enemy, or which causes loss of people and money, is dangerous wealth. Anartha or provocative wealth is that which causes fear from one's own people or from the enemy. There are six varieties of Anartha (literally : non-wealth) or harmful and provocative wealth.[3] First, wealth productive of wealth which is the destruction of an enemy in the front resulting in the destruction of an enemy in the rear. Second, wealth productive of nothing, which is the wealth acquired by helping a neutral king with the army. Third, wealth productive of harm. Fourth, harm productive of wealth, which is helping the neighbouring king of an enemy with men and money. Fifth, harm productive of nothing, which is withdrawal after, encouraging or setting a king of inadequate resources against another. Last, harm productive of harm, which is inactivity after causing excitement of and provocation to a superior monarch.[1] Here also we find that Kautilya insists not on the fulfilment of one limited and partial aim but on success in all fields. "As Dharma is the basis of wealth and as Kama is the fruit of wealth, success in obtaining that kind of wealth which is conducive to the promotion of Dharma, Artha and Kama is comprehensive success".[2] This notion of integral and comprehensive success is a further argument against interpreting Kautilya as an economic determinist or historical materialist or as a mere advocate of the aggrandisement of royal power.

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[1] Arthasastra XV, I : मनुष्याणां वृत्तिरर्थः। मनुष्यवती भूमिरित्यर्थः। तस्याः पृथिव्या लाभपालनोपायः शास्त्रमर्थशास्त्रमिति।

[2] Arthasastra, ix, 7, (अर्थानर्थसंशययुक्ताः तासामुपायविकल्पजाः सिद्धयश्च)।

[3] *Ibid.*

Our analysis of the concept of Artha thus far enables us to distinguish its two meanings. In the narrower sense it is the equivalent of wealth. According to Kautilya Artha (wealth), Dharma and enjoyment form the aggregate of the three kinds of wealth. Of these, it is better to choose the category mentioned earlier rather than the category mentioned later. In the broader sense it is the equivalent of all the means necessary for the acquisition and preservation of an all-Indian imperial system. This broader notion nables us to grasp the unity behind the diverse topics treated in the Arthasastra.[3] A brief sketch of the topics discussed in the book will facilitate the visualization of the comprehensiveness of the concept of Artha in Hindu political philosophy.

We shall systematize the contents of the Arthasastra under three broad topics: First, the theory of kingship or the "actives and functions of the sage-king"—rajarsivrittam.[4] The first, sixth and eighth books are devoted to the elucidation of this subject. Kautilya discusses in the first book the concepts of discipline and punishment; the goal of knowledge, appointment of ministers, councillors, priests, and spies and envoys; protection and education of the princes; conduct of a prince kept under confinement; treatment of a prince kept under restraint; duties of a king (Rajapranidhi);[1] the duties of the king towards the female quarters and lastly the personal safety of the king. The sixth book elucidates "the source of the circle of kingdom." It deals with the seven constituent factors of a commonwealth which are the king, the minister, the country,[2] the fort, the treasury, the army, and the friend. It constructs the categories which make the ideal, in each of the factors listed. The eighth book examines the vices and calamities of each of the sevenfold factors. It analyses the troubles of the king and his kingdom, the aggregate of the troubles of men; the group of molestations, the group of obstructions; the group of troubles of the treasury; the group of troubles of the army and lastly, the group of troubles of a friend. It makes an analysis of the relative gravity of the troubles of the sevenfold factors and the monarchical orientation of the book is revealed in its view of the king's troubles being the most serious.

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[1] Arthasastra, ix, 7 :—अनर्थोऽधर्मः शोक इत्यनर्थत्रिवर्गः । तस्य पूर्वः पूर्वः श्रेयान्प्रतिकर्तुम् । According to Kautilya Anartha is that which generates fear either autonomously or due to some external agency.

[2] Arthasastra, ix, 7, My English translation.

[3] Cf. M. Winternitz, *Some Problems of Indian Literature* (Calcutta, 1925), pp. 82-83 : "The very term Arthasastra shows that it has nothing to do with religious matters. It denotes all doctrines and books concerned with practical life, technics, economics, administration and politics. The most important branch of the Arthasastra is political which as a separate science is also called Nitisastra. But since a knowledge of technical and economical matters is also required for the king and therefore forms part of politics the terms Arthasastra and Nitisastra are often used as synonimous."

[4] Arthasastra, i, 7, p. 13.

Second, the Arthasastra deals with the theory of administration and law. Books two to five are devoted to this topic.

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[1] Arthasastra, i, 19.

[2] It has been one of the principal themes in books on political philosophy to categorize the characteristics of an ideal kingdom or state. Kautilya also gives some significant view-point about the characteristics of the country (जनपदसंपत्) :—"Possessed of capital cities both in the centre and the extremities of the kingdom (स्थानवान्) productive of subsistence not only to its own people, but also to outsiders on occasions of calamities, repulsive to enemies, powerful enough to put down neighbouring kings, free from miry, rocky uneven and desert tracts as well as from conspirators, tigers, wild beasts and large tracts of wilderness, having an aesthetic appearance (कान्तः), containing fertile lands, mines, timber and elephant forests and pastures grounds, containing hidden passages, full of cattles, not depending upon rain for water, possessed of land and waterways, rich in various kinds of commercial articles, capable of bearing the burden of a vast army and heavy taxation, inhabited by agriculturists of good and active character, full of intelligent masters and servants, and with a population noted for its loyalty and good character (भक्तशुचि मनुष्यः)." This sketch of the characteristics of the country is significant to the extent that it stresses the immense importance of economic factors in politics. It is remarkable for its stress on self-sufficiency (आत्मधारण and स्वाजीव).

In the second book we find an analysis of the activities of government superintendents. Traditionally these are known as Ratnins in the Vedic literature and Tirthas in the later works.[1] Kautilya calls them Adhyakshas. In this book we find discussed the problems of formation of villages and country settlements; division of land, forts, revenue, treasury, mining and manufacture; gold, commerce, forest, communication, weight and measure, tolls, agriculture, division of the army, viz, cavalry, infantry chariots and elephants; espionage and urban administration. The fifth book also deals with the problems of administration. Replenishment of the treasury, subsistence to government servants and consolidation of the kingdom are analyzed. Books three and four deal with law. In the third book we find a discussion of civil law, agreements, marriage, inheritance, debts, deposits, slaves and labourers, ownership, defamation, assault, etc. The fourth book discusses criminal law, which is called in Sanskrit "rectification of thorns." It analyzes the problems of protection of artisans and merchants, remedies against calamities in the kingdom, seizure of criminals, trial and torture to elicit confession, protection of all kinds of government departments, fines in lieu of mutilation of limbs, death with or without torture and atonement for violating canons of law and custom.

Third, we find discussed in the Arthasastra the problems of war and diplomacy. Against the views of Vatavyadhi who held that there are only two forms of policy—war and peace, Kautilya, in the seventh books,[2] held that there are six forms of policy—peace, war, indifference or neutrality, making preparations for marching, alliance[3] or seeking the protection of another, and making peace with one and waging war with another.[4] The ninth book is devoted to an analysis of the work of an invader. It deals with such topics as knowledge of the

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1. S. B., v, 3, 1 ; T. B. ,i, 7, 3 ; T. S., i, 8, 9.

2. Arthasastra vii, 1, षाड्गण्यसमुद्देशः क्षयस्थानवृद्धिनिश्चयश्च ।

3. For a discussion of the Hindu parallel of the Western theory of balance of power, see Kalidas Nag, *Les Theories Diplomatiques de l' Inde ancienne et l' Arthasastra* (Paris, 1923).

4. Arthasastra, vii, 1, p. 317.

power, place, time, strength and weakness of the enemy ; the time of the invasion, recruitment, remedies against internal and external troubles, persons associated with warfare and enemies and success to be obtained by the employment of alternative strategic means. The tenth book relates to war and analyzes subjects like encampment, protection of the army in time of sickness and attack, forms of the treacherous fights and the work of infantry, cavalry, chariots and elephants, etc. The eleventh book is devoted to the republican states and analyzes the ways and means of fomenting dissensions among them. Kautilya's policy with regard to the republican states is stated thus : "The acquisition of help of republics is better than the acquisition of an army, or friend, or profits. By means of conciliation and gifts, the conqueror should secure and enjoy the services of such republics as are invincible to the enemy and are favourably disposed towards himself. But those who are opposed to him, he should put down by sowing the seeds of dissension among them and by secretly punishing them."[1] He refers to two types of republics, some of them specializing in commerce and arms and the others designated by the title of a Raja (king or consul).[2] The twelfth book analyzes the problems arising out of dealings with a powerful enemy. It examines such topics as the duties of a messenger, battle of intrigues, spies with weapons, fire and poison ; capture of the enemy by means of secret contrivances or by means of superior military strength, and total conquest. In the thirteenth book we get a discussion of the means to capture a fort. It discusses such subjects as sowing seeds of dissension, enticement of kings by secret contrivances, the work of spies in a siege, the operation of a siege, and restoration of peace in a conquered country. They fourteenth book lists the secret and esoteric means to handle an enemy, wonderful and delusive contrivances, remedies against the injuries of one's own army.

The comprehensiveness and richness of content of the concept of Artha is demonstrated by this brief sketch of the topics and subjects discussed by Kautilya.[1] In a way, Artha is equivalent to both domestic and international politics. It also compreheneds criminal and civil law and discussion of warfare. Thus it is clear that the term Arthasastra basically and fundamentally treats of political problems. Economic problems occupy a very subordinate place in the scheme of the investigations and discussions of the Arthasastra and Beni Prasad is not accurate in his statement that "the term Arthasastra which was applied to politics is quite as applicable to economics". We mentioned earlier the sevenfold factors of a commonwealth referred to in the book. In a sense, we could indentify the concept of Artha with the notion of the sevenfold factors (प्रकृतिसंपदः). Before we analyze further the concept of Artha and the nature of the Arthasastra we would like to say a few words about these sevenfold factors. This examination gains theoretical interest from the point that usually these factors are considered to be the elements of sovereigny.

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[1] Arthasastra, xi ; my English translation.

[2] Arthasastra, xi ; my English translation.

4. *NO THEORY OF SOVEREIGNTY IN ANCIENT HINDU THOUGHT*

The analysis of the problem of the concept of sovereignty is immensely important for the visualization of the nature of theoretical abstraction in political science in ancient India. The Sanskrit words that are usually translated by sovereignty are several. According to Sinha, the Indian equivalent of soveregnity was Ksatra or Ksatrasri in the Vedic literature and Swamitva in the Arthasastra, the law codes and the inscriptions.[2] Ghoshal thinks that etymologically the word Rajyam means

[1] Cf. R. C. Majumdar, *Ancient India*, p.149; "In one respect the conception of state in ancient India strikingly differs from our own. Its scope of activities was all-embracing and no distinction was made between personal and civic rights and duties or between moral priciples and positive law. Everything that had any bearing upon the moral and spiritual nature or material conditions of man came within the scope of state activites. This is best illustrated by an examination of the contents of the Arthasastra. It includes within the functions of the state not merely the securities of life and property, administration of justice and economic control, including nationalisation of trade and industry but also maintenance of proper relations between members of a family, the strict observance of rules prescribed by religion or social customs and etiquette."

[2] Sinha, *op. cit.*, pp. xviii-xix.

royalty or sovereignty and derivatively it means a kingdom.[1] Sarkar[2] and Shamasastry translate Aisvarya with sovereignty, while Jayaswal translates it as rulership or authority.[3] We have discussed the concept of Ksatra and found that primarily it signifies military or physical power. The word Rajyam mainly connotes the abstracted element of a king and there is nothing to warrant its translation by sovereignty. Aisvarya primarily means prosperity and wealth and secondarily can also mean power. Most writers on Hindu political philosophy translated Prakritisampadah as "elements of sovereignty" but a critical analysis of the factors consituting Prakriti does not warrant this translation.

The concept of sovereignty as developed in the west by Bodin, Hobbes and Rousseau as well as by the Austinians is a highly abstract juristic notion and it has reference to the earlier concepts of *plenitudo potestatis*,[4] *auctoritas*, etc. The concept of sovereignty arose on the west[5] because there was a search after the notion of an ultimate and absolute political superior. This search in its turn was generated by the competing claims of the popes and the emperors and of the feudal aristocracy for supreme power. The formulation of this concept was necessitated and greatly furthered by the growth of the bourgeoisie, positive law and the legal idea of contract. Contrasted with this situation there were no conflicts in ancient India between rival ideological protagonists for supreme political power. It was assumed by the theoreticians that the king has total political powers. Hence this problem of ultimate political power did not arise. The ascription of total political powers to the king (स्वामी) is different from the absolute, all-comprehensive imperialistic chracter of the sovereign omnipotent modern state. The modern western theory of sovereignty grew up as a consequence of the decline of the dominance of the theological world-view and natural law. The disintegration of the trascendent and cosmic character of a divine law and natural law paved the way for the emergence of the theory that the political sovereign is the supreme maker of laws. In the ancient and medieval periods in Europe the fundamental divine law was above the political superior. But because of the emergence of a mechanistic and secularistic cosmology that ideal went into the background and the way was prepared for the rise of the modern sovereign state which directly or tacitly came to be regarded as the source of all laws. The growth of mechanized communication and transportation helped in the concentration of the administrative, military and financial powers of the state and thereby provided a physical foundation for the theory of absolute monistic soverignty. But in ancient India, or as a matter of fact in the whole of the ancient world, there was the prevalence of the supremacy of the laws of God, of primeval norms and ordinances and of the teachings of the religious prophets and seers. The part of life and activities governed by the express laws of the political superiors were small and limited. The means of communication were undeveloped and hence regular governance characterised by meddlesome intervention was not possible. Furthermore in the west the bourgeoisie and the capitalists sponsored the theory of royal sovereignty in order to have a support against the aristocrats at home. In India on the other hand the prevalent view of the non-concentration of power shown by specialization of the Kshatriyas in military activities and Vaisyas in economic activities did not generate the problem of the quest of a supreme and ultimate political power to which a particular caste could get associated for strengthening its own privileges. Because the problem did not arise, the answer was not formulated on a theoretical plane.

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[1] Ghoshal, *A History of Hindu Political Theories* (Oxford, 1923), p. 84n.

[2] Benoy Sarkar, *Institutions and Theories* p. 214: "The conception of external Aisvarya (sovereignty) was well established in the Hindu philosophy of the state. The Hindu thinkers not only analyzed sovereignty with regard to the constituent elements in a single state. They realized also that sovereignty is not complete unless it is external as well as internal, that is, unless the state can exercise its internal authority unobstructed by, and independently of, other states." I regard it as futile to read the modern western distinction between internal and external sovereignty in ancient Hindu thought. Aisvarya is not even a basic concept of ancient Hindu political thought.

[3] Arthasastra, v, 5, p, 305; Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 42-194.

[4] Augustinius Triumphus refers to the *plenitudo potestatis*. Marsiglio of Padua and William of Ockam developed the theory of *plenitudo potestatis*. Cf. Otto Gierke, *Political Theories of the Middle Ages*, p. 35.

[5] J. W. Garner, *Political Science and Government* (Calcutta, 1951) says: "The modern terms 'sovereign' and 'sovereignty' (*souverain, souverainete*) were first used by the French jurists notably by Beaumanoir and Loyseau in the fifteenth century (Viollet, *Establishments de Saint Louis*, vol. ii, p. 370; Carre de Malberg, *Theorie general de l' etat*, vol. i, pp. 73-74), and later found their way into English, Italian, and German legal and political literature. Bodin in the sixteenth century was the first writer to discuss at length in his *Six Books on the Republic* the nature and characteristics of sovereignty. In the later edition of his work he employed the term *summa potestas* and in the French edition the term *souverainete*."

What we are saying can be substantiated if we analyze the "factors of the kingdom." These seven factors are referred to with very minor variations in the Arthasastra, the Sukraniti, the Kamandakanitisara and the Vishnupurana. According to Kautilya these seven elements or factors are the king, the minister, the country, the fort, the treasury, the army, and the ally. He devotes one chapter to analyze the best qualities of each of these elements. There is no word here which could connote the legalistic notion of sovereignty. According to the Sukraniti the kingdom is an organism of seven limbs (सप्तांगमुच्यते राज्यम्) --the king, the minister, the friend, the treasury, population (राष्ट्र), the fort and the army. We get a rudimentary formulation of the organic theory here when Sukra regards the king as the head, the minister as the eye, the friend as the ear, the treasury as the mouth, the army as the mind and the fort as the arms of the kingdom. Here also it is clear that Sukra does not formulate any legal notion of determinate sovereign power. He calls the Rashtra to be the legs of the kingdom (हस्तौपादौदुर्गराष्ट्रौ) and this indicates an elementary state of theoretical formulation. Besides, we certainly cannot translate the word Prakriti with sovereignty. Philosophically, in the Samkhya works, the word Prakriti signifies the notion of object or nature including both the cosmic universe and the human mind. It is distinguished from the pure silent selves. In the Amarakosha Prakriti means only the elements or organs of a kingdom.[1] That Kautilya definitely did not mean sovereignty by Prakriti is apparent in one of his pregnant sentences ; "The king and the kingdom are the Prakriti or the important elements of the

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[1] Quoted in Ghoshal , *op. cit.*, p. 84 n.

Prakriti."[1] Hence we find it difficult to equate Prakritisampadah with "elements of sovereignty."

But we are only repudiating the presence of the concept of sovereignty. We do accept that there were sovereign states in ancient India. But acceptance of the historical existence of an object is not equivalent to acceptance of the conceptual formulation of it. We do consider that the historical and institutional problem of locating the seat of sovereign power in ancient India is a legitimate field of investigation. Once, one had defined the concept of sovereignty one can undertake such investigations. But here also we have to be careful in understanding that sovereignty as an actuality in the context of the ancient and medieval world would apply to political power only. By sovereignty in those days we should not mean the absolute universal all-comprehensive power which was regarded as the characteristic of sovereignty by the positivistic and analytical school of jurisprudence. However there were sovereign states in ancient India in the sense that the holders of the political office of kingship could make their will prevail by resort to force. We have been only denying the conceptual equivalent in Sanskrit of the notion of sovereignty and not the historical existence of actual sovereign states.

The examination of the theory of sovereignty was only incidental at this point. We are examining the concept of Artha and we hazarded the hypothesis that the sevenfold constituents of Prakriti are a good formulation of the content of Artha. It is true that Kautilya does not state this identity. But if we take into consideration the broader notion of Artha and critically scrutinize the contents of the Arthasastra we find that most of the problems dealt with in the latter are only problems concerning some one of the sevenfold factors. Even a mere glance at the contents of the Arthasastra is enough to convince us that Kautilya has used the terms Artha and Arthasastra in a very comprehensive sense.

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[1] Arthasastra, viii, 2. Kautilya enunciates the policy which the king should follow with regard to the Prakritis :

संपादयत्यसंपन्नाः प्रकृतीरात्मवान्नृपः ।
विवृद्धाश्चानुरक्ताश्च प्रकृतीर्हन्त्यनात्मवान् ।।
आत्मवांस्त्वल्पदेशोऽपि युक्तः प्रकृतिसंपदा ।
नयज्ञः पृथिवीं कृत्स्नां जयत्येव न हीयते ।। —Arthasastra vi, 1.

5. *THE NATURE OF THE ARTHASASTRA*

The exalted conception that Kautilya has of the Arthasastra is apparent in his designating it by the name of Veda. Usually according to the orthodox tradition the name Veda is used only for the four Samhitas, the Rigveda, the Samaveda, the Yajurveda and the Atharvaveda. The Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads attached to these Samhitas are also called by the name Veda. Oftentimes when only the Samhitas are to be designated, the name Trayi is used, which signifies the Rig, the Sama and the Yaju Samhitas. The Atharva is considered non-orthodox.[1] Kautilya designates both the Atharvaveda and Itihasaveda by the name of Veda. Under the Itihasaveda he includes the Puranas, historical books, tales, illustrative stories, Dharmasastra and the Arthasastra. This designation by Veda of the Arthasastra as well as of the historical books and stories is significant. It shows the secularistic temper of Kautilya.[2] It is too much for an orthodox Brahmin to call historical and administrative manuals by the name of Veda, which is considered revealed and hence sacred.

The nature of the Arthasastra has been also debated, whether it is a theoretical book, or a manual for princes or merely a reference book for administrative details. The last statement is evidently incorrect because Kautilya is not concerned with a description of the concrete situation in any polity. The non-recognition of this simple fact has led to an enormous confusion

[1] In the Upanishads we find references only to the Trayi. Cf. the views of Pargiter with regard to the Atharvaveda : "It is a heterogeneous collection of the most popular spells current among the masses, and its most salient teaching is sorcery...these songs began with and embody the ancient beliefs and practices of the peoples whom the Ailas subjugated, so that naturally the spirit which breathes therein is that of a prehistoric age, of the times prior to the higher development of Brahmanism among the Ailas." At other places Kautilya also uses the word Trayi.

[2] Cf. इतिहासपुराणाभ्यां बोधयेदर्थशास्त्रवित् ।—Arthas stra, V. 6.

and useless work in the field of Indian political science.[1] Even a cursory glance at the contents of the book is enough to convince the reader that he is not reading a historical book on the Mauryan administration. To write a history of Hindu administration as actually in operation, on the basis of the Arthasastra is as ludicrous an attempt as to write the history of Italian public administration on the basis of Machiavelli's *The Prince* or of Greek public administration on the basis of Aristotle's *Politics*. This fact would also indicate the inadequacy of such attempts as *Megasthenes und Kautilya*[2] and others at constructing a concrete picture of Mauryan administration by the comparison of the Arthasastra and the Asokan inscriptions. It is true that the Arthasastra is intensely interested in the prescription of instructions about administration, criminal law and warfare but it is treating of these things in an abstract manner. It is also true that Kautilya drew upon the details of the then Mauryan administrative system but he generalized from them'[3] Therefore it is essential to grasp the theoretical character of the book. One should not be bewildered at the mass of details about warfare, espionage and administration given in the book. The immense number of details does not make the book non-theoretical. Both the philosophical assumptions of the author and the normative and didactic tone in which he speaks make it perfectly four clear that it is a waste of effort and an engagement in an illegitimate enterprise to write a history of Mauryan administration on the basis of this book. The name of the book is Sastram, which means a philosophical and theoretical exposition and not a historical presentation.[1] It is true that the book is concerned with administration but never does it propose to give a faithful picture of a concrete polity. In short, it is a theoretical work dealing with kingship, administration, war and diplomacy.

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[1] F. W. Thomas, "Political and Social Organisation of the Maurya Empire," C. H. I. 474-494, makes this mistake.

[2] Otto Stein, *Megasthenes und Kautilya* (Wien, 1921) ; H. C. Raychaudhri *Political History of Ancient India*, Calcutta, 1938, pp. 226ff. commits a similar fallacy, when he asserts that although a late work (it existed according to him before the second century A. D.) it may be used to confirm and supplement the information gathered from other sources, like the Junagadh Inscription of Rudradaman.

[3] Almost all the writers who have written on the Mauryan administration on the basis of the Arthasastra have made one great mistake . They have mistaken the pragmatic maxims and precepts of the Arthasastra to be the actual descriptions of concrete institutional polities. This is a fallacy of the same type as the writing of the history of Greek public administration on the basis of the sixth book of Aristotle's *Politics*. If the statement of Kautilya in the first and the second and the third and fourth books are historically oriented and have reference to the concrete political and institutional structure, then generalising from this same argument we will also have to concede that the details about दुर्गलम्भोपायः and औपनिषदिकम् are also actual descriptions of what had taken place or was taking place in the contemporary period.

6. *KAUTILYA'S CONCEPT OF DANDA*

Besides the concept of Artha, another basic concept in Hindu political philosophy is Danda. In the Arthasastra of Kautilya we find a systematic examination of this concept. In several other books dealing with political thought we find this notion of Danda analyzed. The word Danda is very comprehensive in connotation. Primarily it means a staff or rod. The Brahmachari and the Sannyasi are expected to have a Danda. The king had his Danda which symbolizes kingly power and the authority of the king to punish offenders. In the Satapatha Brahmana the king is called Adandya, meaning thereby that he was beyond the reach of the ordinary mechanisms of legal penalization.[2] In the Arthasastra of Kautilya we find Danda used in the sense of a staff.[3] The word Danda also means punishment. In the Grihyasutra of Paraskara we find the Danda referred to as the emblem of kingly power, implying punishment. This notion of Danda is found in the Arthasastra when Kautilya speaks of physical punishment or fires. In a generalized sense we can say that Danda as punishment means coercion. We find that Danda is one of the four methods, the other three being peace, Dama (restraints) and dissension, to conduct political affairs. The Bhagavadgita also refers to Danda in this sense of coercion.[1] A third meaning of Danda is army and Kautilya uses the word also in this sense. According to Kautilya the best army(दण्डसंपत्)is one coming down directly from father and grandfather (of the monarch), constantly faithful, not averse to making a long sojourn, always invincible, endowed with the capacity of endurance, dexterous in fighting various kinds of battles, efficient in the use of handling several types of weapons, ready to cooperate in the happiness and adversity of the king and consequently not falling foul with him (सहवृद्धिक्षयिकत्वादद्वैध्यः), and mainly constituted of the soldiers of the Kshatriya caste. But by far, the most important and fundamental meaning of Danda as a concept is coercion or puninishment. Kautilya also refers to Danda in this sense of coercion. Kautilya and the Mahabharata and other works speak of Dandaniti or the art of punishment. Perhaps this term Dandaniti has a connotation similar to our modern notion of politics as the science of power or coercion[2] Kautilya specifies some distinct notions of Danda.

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[1] सुखग्रहणविज्ञेयं तत्त्वार्थपदनिश्चितम् ।
कौटिल्येन कृतं शास्त्रं विमुक्तग्रन्थविस्तरम् ॥ —Arthasastra, i, 1.
पृथिव्या लाभे पालने च यावन्त्यर्थशास्त्राणि पूर्वाचार्यैः ।
प्रस्तावितानि प्रायशस्तानि संहृत्यैकमिदमर्थशास्त्रं कृतम् ॥
—Arthasastra, i. 1.
येन शास्त्रं च शस्त्रं च नन्दराजगता च भूः ।
अमर्षणोधृतान्याशु तेन शास्त्रमिदं कृतम् ॥ —Arthasastra, xv, 1.

[2] S. B. v, 4. 4, 7.

[3] Sten Konow, *Kautaliya Studies* (Oslo, 1945), p. 45.

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[1] दण्डो दमयतामस्मि——B. G. x. 38.
cf. दमो दण्ड इति प्रोक्तस्तात्स्थयात् दण्डो महीपतिः ।
तस्य नीतिदण्डनीतिः नयनान्नीतिरुच्यते ॥ (Kamandaka Niti,xii,15)

[2] Contrasting the Faustian-western culture from the Gracco-Roman, Indian and Chinese cultures, Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, 1. 341, emphasised the notion and cult of power as the distinctive hall-mark of the western culture. "In the ethics of the West, everything is direction, claim to power, will to affect the distant. Here Luther is completely at one with Nietzsche, Popes with Darwinians, Socialist with Jesuits ; for one and all, the beginning of morale is a claim to general and permanent validity. It is a necessity of the Faustian soul that this should be so............ But it was not so either in the Classical, or in India, or in China. Buddha, for instance, gives a pattern to take or to leave, and Epicurus offers counsel. Both undeniably are forms of high morale, and neither contains the will-element." I feel that inspite of being a protagonist of morphologies of world-history Spengler perhaps generalizes from the prostrate condition of India in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Unless the Vedantic metaphysics, Mayavada, and Buddhist Nirvana are studied and considered along with the Arthasastra and the Mahabharata concept of Danda as well as with Hindu political achievements, we get a one-sided picture of India. But, on the other hand I do maintain that the colossal outbrust of creative political energy that characterizes Western history since Charlemagne is unparalleled. I have discussed these problems in my "India and the Philosophy of History", *Spark*, Patna, February, 1951.

Danda is rooted in discipline. Danda is necessary for the security and well-being of living beings. Kautilya does not only speak of human beings but of living beings. Discipline in which Danda has its foundations is either artificial or natural.[1] The prince is to learn discipline by daily contacts with others who are proficient in knowledge. This shows that discipline is an intellectual category according to Kautilya. But it is also a moral category because according to him restraint of the organs is essential for the acquisition of knowledge and discipline. This notion of Danda being rooted in discipline would dispel any idea of Kautilya being only a ruthless advocate of aggrandisement and power. The emphasis on knowledge and restraint of the senses shows that he was conscious of the intellectual and moral foundations of kingly power.

Kautilya repudiates the view of the previous writers that Danda is the most efficient technique of control. He says that whosoever imposes severe punishment exasperates people while he who awards only mild punishment is defeated. Hence Danda or punishment should be dispensed after due consideration and in proportion to the gravity of the offense.[2] Punishment, when wrongly inflicted, leads to the generation of evil feelings not only among the householders but also among the ascetics. When not wielded at all, it leads to anarchy. Hence only that punishment which is dispensed after balanced reasoning leads to the growth of Artha, enjoyment and Dharma, of the subjects.[3] This indicates that according to Kautilya punishment should be "as deserved". He favours neither rigor nor leniency or moderation. Hence Kautilya prescribed that when the king inflicts unjustifiable punishment upon an innocent man, he shall dedicate to god Varuna, in water, a fine equal to thirty times the unjust imposition. Afterwards the amount will be distributed among Brahmins. Thereby the king will be purified from the sin of unjust inflictions of punishment (तेन तत्पूयते पापं राज्ञो दण्डापचारजम्) because king Varuna is the ruler of sinners among men. In the chapters dealing with criminal law Kautilya holds that in imposing the first, middlemost or highest amercements the judicial commissioner (प्रदेष्टा दण्डकर्मणि) shall take into consideration the social position of the persons (this will be in opposition to the spirit of commutative justice), the nature of the offence, the cause, the gravity or lightness (that lead to the perpetration of the offence), the antecedent and subsequent circumstances, the time and the place and shall not fail to notice equitable distinctions among offenders whether belonging to the royal family or to the subject population.

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[1] कृतकः स्वाभाविकश्च विनयः । क्रिया हि द्रव्यं विनयति नाद्रव्यम् । Also विद्याविनयहेतुरिन्द्रियजयः विनयमूलो दण्डः ।

[2] Cf. Arthasastra, V, I, स्वपक्षे परपक्षे वा तूष्णीं दण्डं प्रयोजयेत् ।

[3] Arthasastra, i, 4.

This analysis of the concept of Danda shows that when Kautilya talks of Danda as staff or as army he has a substansive conception in mind. He thinks of Danda as an object or substance. This physical notion of Danda is apparent in the use of phrases like wielder of Danda. But he also uses the concept in a broader sense. According to him the art of Danda is concerned with the totality of means for the acquisition, preservation, growth and distribution of things. In such a context he thinks of Dandaniti as concerned not only with penal sanctions but with the totality of social and political relationships, involving, among other things, the king, his ministers and the army. We may point out here that Manu has a very anthropomorphic notion of Danda[1]. He thinks that Danda is the son of God. He identifies Danda with the king. He ascribes anthropomorphic characteristics to Danda and talks of its colour and vigour and asserts that it is the sure guarantee of the maintenance of peace and order.

This notion of Danda, which simultaneously designates a staff, an army, physical punishment and legal sanction and which is such a vital element for the preservation of peace and order, shows that according to the Hindu thinkers force was a very important element in politics. It is true that the spiritual goal and mundane peace for which this Danda is needed are also emphasized, but the very fact that a concept which primarily signifies force is raised to such a pinnacle shows that the Hindu theorists put great stress on physical and legal and military power and force in their scheme of political thinking. But the enormous stress on force and power or Danda does not mean the valuational appreciation of the concentration of violence. Kingship is exalted not because it can muster physical and mechanical force but because the physical force is to be placed in the service of Dharma. There is no hint in Kautilya's Arthasastra that force or power is regarded as the goal of political existence. Kautilya advocates that political power should be exercised in cooperation (सहायसाध्यं राजत्वम्) and centralized political military omnicompetence is not his aim. Hence Danda is an immensely significant political category but is not the sole category. It is not the essence of politics and is never to be intended for the support of the interests of the stronger but is the necessary adjunct in the realization of a cooperative and organic social existence guided by the monarch.

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[1] Manusmriti, vii, 14-17. This book has been translated by G. Buhler (Oxford, 1886), vol. XXV of *The Sacred Books of the East.* Henceforth all reference to pages will refer to this translation.

Before we discuss the interrelationships of Dandaniti with other branches of knowledge, we should like to refer to two other terms—Bala and Sakti, which are also related to Danda. Bala primarily means physical strength and in this sense it is used in the Atharvaveda. The Chandogya Upanishad constructs what perhaps amounts to an absolute metaphysic of Bala.[1] It says that the whole universe is being sustained by Bala and calls Bala to be Brahma. Kautilya uses the word Bala in two senses. First, it means the army. This significance of Bala is also found in the Mahabharata. Second, it means strength or power as such. Kautilya thinks that Bala or power makes the mind unbalanced.[1] The term Sakti stands for power or strength. In the later development of Hindu religion the term Sakti signified the goddess of power and destruction.[2] Kautilya refers to three kinds of Sakti.[3] The "Sakti of Mantra" is the strength acquired by intellectual achievements and knowledge of good statecraft. The "Sakti of Prabhu" is the strength gained by a good and full treasury and an efficient army. The "Sakti of inspiration and perseverance" is the strength acquired by enthusiasm and concentration. These two terms Bala and Sakti are identified by Kautilya. Roughly we can say that these terms help us to get a broader notion of Danda itself. The Sukraniti also defines some kindred concepts. Bala or strength is that by which a work can be done without anxiety. Parakrama or vital power is that by which rival princes can be humbled down. Utthana is regarded as energetic preparation for waging war.

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[1] Chandogya Up., vii, 7, 9 :—"Power (बल) is better than understanding. One powerful man shakes a hundred men of understanding. If a man is powerful, he becomes a rising man. If he rises, he becomes a man who visits people. If he visits, he becomes a follower of wise people... By power the earth stands firm, and the sky, and the heaven, and the mountains, gods and men, cattle, birds, herbs, trees,...by power the world stands firm. Mediate on power. He who meditates on power, as Brahman, is, as it were, lord and master as far as power reaches—he who mediates on power as Brahman".

7. *KAUTILYA'S THEORY OF THE NATURE AND METHOD OF POLITICS*

We shall now discuss Kautilya's notion of the specific place of Dandaniti in the scheme of knowledge. The Sanskrit word for knowledge is Vidya. Vidya signifies both the various secularistic branches of knowledge as well as the knowledge of the trans-cosmic absolute Brahma.[4] Kautilya accepts that there are four branches of knowledge. The first is Anvikshaki. Literally it means dialectics.[5] Kautilya includes under Anvikshaki the philosophical systems of the dualistic Samkhya, the Yoga and the materialistic philosophy of the Lokayata.[1] The second branch of knowledge is constituted by the three Vedas, Rig, Sama and Yaju. This literature helps in ordering the social structure composed of the four castes and the four Ashramas. The third system of knowledge is Varta and it comprehends agriculture, cattle-breeding and trade.[2] The fourth branch of knowledge is Dandaniti. We can get an idea of the comprehensiveness involvedi n this scheme of classification of knowledge when we compare it with the views of other writers refered to in the Arthasastra.

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[1] Arthasastra, vii, 14.

[2] According to the Hindu tradition Sakti or primal creative energy or force is immanent in the absolute being. According to Ramanuja Sakti is the power of the absolute. In the Samkhya, cosmic procession starts with the imparting of the Sannidhi to Prakriti by the Purusha.

Cf. K. P. Jayaswal, *History of India* (Lahore, 1933), p. 49 : "National service of Hindu state - makers was always a solemn dedication to the Supreme Force which presides over human destiny. The dedication was made to a particular aspect of Him, to a particular temperament of His, according to the national temperament of the time".

[3] Arthasastra, vi, 2.

[4] Isha Upanishad, 12-14 ; Chandogya Upanishad, vi, 1. 2.

[5] For the discussion of dialectics in Indian thought, see V. P. Varma, "Buddha and Marx", *Patna College Magazine* (April, 1946) ; Th. Stcherbatsky, *Buddhist Logic*, Vol. I.

Brihaspati as quoted by Kautilya only accepts two Vidyas —Dandaniti and Varta. Sukra the reputed teacher of the "demons" and honoured by Krishna in the Bhagavadgita, accepts only one Vidya, that is Dandaniti. The school of Manu represents the opposite tendency since it accepts the Vedic literature also as a part of knowledge along with Dandaniti and Varta. Brihaspati had rejected the Vedas as a branch of knowledge on the ground that they are superfluous for a man experienced in temporal affairs. Sukra had stated that all knowledge is rooted in Dandaniti. Manu had rejected dialectics as a part of knowledge because it is only a special branch of the Vedas. Kautilya accepts all the four subjects—dialectics, Vedas, Varta and Dandaniti as part of knowledge.

Kautilya has something interesting to say on the relationship between dialectics and Dandaniti. "Anvikshaki comprises the philosophy of Samkhya, Yoga and Lokayata. Righteous and unrighteous acts are learned from the triple Vedas, wealth and non-wealth from Varta, the expedient and the inexpedient as well as potency and impotency from the science of government".[3] Philosophy viewing the other sciences in the light of reason does good to the world, keeps the mind steady in weal and woe and bestows skill in knowledge, speech and action. Philosophy is even declared to be the lamp of all the sciences, the means of accomplishing all deeds and the support of all duties.[4] This

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1. Arthasastra, i, 2, p. 6.
2. *Ibid.*, i, 3, p. 8.
3. Arthasastra, i, 2, p. 6.
4. *Ibid.*, i 6, English translation by Ramaprasad Chand, *Indo-Aryan Races*, p. 228, quoted in Ghosal, *op. cit.*, p. 128.

passage shows that due to its critical and investigating nature (Hetu) dialectics aids not only the Vedas and Varta but also Dandaniti. The specific topics attributed to Dandaniti here are four—the expedient, the inexpedient, potency and impotency. The Sanskrit words, Naya and Apanaya which are rendered as expedient and inexpedient, have a meaning not only of the technically and economically expedient or otherwise but also, and perhaps more so, have an ethical significance. Since dialectics is the means of accomplishing all deeds and is the support of all duties, necessarily it has vital connections with political deeds and duties. Thus, according to Kautilya, dialectics is necessary for political action and hence he advocates that the prince should learn dialectics from reputed teachers.

We have seen above the influence of dialectics on Dandaniti. Now we shall see what Dandaniti has to do with dialectics and other branches of knowledge. "The sceptre on which the well-being and progress of the sciences of Anvikshaki, the triple Vedas and Varta depend is known as Danda (punishment). That which treats of Danda is the law of punishment or science of government".[1] Kautilya defines the scope of the Vedas which include not only the three orthodox ones but also the Atharvaveda and the auxiliary subjects which facilitate Vedic studies. Varta is useful to society because it brings in grains, cattle, gold, forest produce, and free labour. It is by means of the treasury and the army that the king can hold under his control both his own and the enemy's groups. Anvikshaki or dialectics signifies the three philosophical schools, (1) the Samkhya, (2) the Yoga and (3) the materialistic system of the Carvakas. The Samkhya is a dualistic metaphysic and is non-theistic, although it accepts a plurality of Purushas who are supposed to gain freedom from the trammels of nature by the realization of their disinterested, transcedent and luminous character.[2] The Yoga accepts the Samkhya metaphysic though it becomes theistic in its later versions and primarily insists on a spiritual and esoteric technique for liberation from nature. We have earlier referred to the materialism of the school of Brihaspati. It is highly significant that in his list of dialectics Kautilya does not even mention the spiritual monism of the Vedanta and it perhaps shows his secularistic bent of mind. According to the Sukraniti, logic (तर्कशास्त्र) and Vedanta are comprehended under Anvikshaki. Kautilya makes no mention of the Buddhistic and the Jaina systems of thought. He is also silent about the logical realism of the Nyaya and the atomistic pluralism of the Vaiseskia although these would fall in line with his general intellectual orientation.

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[1] Arthasastra, i, 4, p. 8.

[2] V. P. Varma, "Origins of Samkhya Thought and Philosophy", *Patna College Magazine* (May, 1949), pp. 97-107. ; *Ibid.*, "Buddha and Kapila", *Parjata*, (October and November, 1946).

According to Kautilya, Dandaniti deals with the means of preservation and acquisition of dialectics, Vedas and Varta.[1] He does not analyze how Dandaniti aids in the acquisition and preservation of dialectics. Dandaniti aids the Vedas in so far as it prescribes ways and means to regulate the four castes and the four orders which are the integral part of the Vedic view of life and culture. Dandaniti aids Varta because both treasury (related to Varta) and punishment are necessary for the control both of one's own kingdom and of enemies. Since Dandaniti is so vitally essential for the other branches of knowledge Kautilya goes on to say that "It is on this art of government that the course of the progress of the world depends,"[2] and further on asserts that "Hence the (first) three branches of knowledge are dependent for their well-being (or rooted in) on the art of punishment."[3]

This inter-relationship of the various branches of knowledge serves to make clear Kautilya's view about Dandaniti. It shows that Kautilya does not conceive of politics as an end in itself. It is true that his inclusion of the preponderantly atheistic systems of knowledge under Anvikshaki would tend to support a view that he conceived of politics as an end since there is nothing transcendent. But we have to remember very definitely, that, in spite of being atheistic, the systems of early Yoga and early Samkhya are emphatic believers in liberation.[1] Their main goal is to teach emancipation from the bonds of nature. By accepting the Yoga and the Samkhya as branches of dialectics, and by not negating their teachings, implicitly Kautilya accepts a gospel of liberation from the "dance of nature." Hence there is the silent acceptance of the transcedental in him. Moreover, again and again, he says that the institution of kingship preserves the Vedic social system which, when conformed with, leads to the attainment of heaven and liberation. This is a second argument to repudiate the common view that Kautilya accepts politics to be an end in itself. Third, he definitely states that if the king performs his duties well he will attain heaven. Here once again we find the acceptance of the transcendent good. It is because of this metaphysic that he says that a prince should be trained in the knowledge of the self. It is true that Kautilya introduces a secularistic note in his concept of transcendent good when he says that the army should be encouraged to fight by promises of heaven.[1] But here also we are meeting with a common notion of Hindu theology that the person who loses his life in battle attains heaven. Hence we find that Kautilya accepts the basic notions of Hindu metaphysics and theology.

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[1] According to Kautilya, Dandaniti has four special functions :—

(i) अलब्धलाभार्था—Acquisition of that which is not under control and possession.

(ii) लब्धपरिरक्षणी—Preservation of that which has been acquired.

(iii) रक्षितविवर्धनी—Accentuation of that which has been preserved.

(v) वृद्धस्यतीर्थेषु प्रतिपादनी—Righteous and due apportionment of that which has been accentuated.

[2] Arthasastra, 1. 4.

[3] *Ibid.*, 1. 5, तस्माद्दण्डमूलास्तिस्रो विद्याः ।

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[1] According to the Yogasutra of Patanjali :

तद्वैराग्यादपि दौषबीजक्षये कैवल्यम् । i, 3, 50.
सत्वपुरुषयोः शुद्धसाम्ये कैवल्यमिति । i, 3, 55.
तदाविवेकनिम्नं कैवल्यप्राग्भारं चित्तम् । 1, 4, 26.
पुरूषार्थशून्यानां गुणानां प्रतिप्रसवः कैवल्यं
स्वरूपप्रतिष्ठा वा चितिशक्तिरिति । i, 4, 34.

According to the Samkhya :—

प्राप्ते शरीरभेदे चरितार्थत्वात्प्रधानविनिवृत्तौ ।
ऐकान्तिकमात्यन्तिकमुभयं कैवल्यमाप्नोति ।।
औत्सुक्यनिवृत्त्यर्थं यथा क्रियासु प्रवर्त्तते लोकः ।
पुरुषस्य विमोक्षार्थं प्रवर्त्तते तद्वदव्यक्तम् ।। —Samkhyakarika 68, 58.

Some scholars tend to think that Kautilya raised Arthasastra to the dignity of an independent science by emancipating it from the bondage of theology.[2] We emphatically repudiate such a view. The basic notions of Hindu theology and religion are all accepted by Kautilya.[3] Hence in this sense he does not raise politics to the status of an independent science. But he does raise Arthasastra to the position of a systematic, comprehensive and rational-analytical branch of knowledge because of his intensive treatment of all the related and kindred topics of kingship, economics, social relations, law and diplomacy. One can talk of an independent or subordinate branch of knowledge by having in mind the treatment given by an author to a subject. If the author makes a systematic and intensive analysis of a topic he can be said to have in mind its independent character. This type of analysis we find in Kautilya's Arthasastra. It is not necessary to credit him with repudiating Vedic theology, which he does not,[1] to show that he raised Arthasastra to an exalted and independent position, just as it is not necessary to repudiate Aristotle's acceptance of a divine and contemplative life to show that he raised politics to an independent status.[2] Hence we feel that notwithstanding the acceptance of transcendent good and Vedic theological notions, Kautilya does raise Arthasastra to the position of an independent and comprehensive branch of knowledge because of his systematic presentation of the philosophical assumptions and an intensive treatment of the details of the subject matter of Arthasastra. His independence in treating a subject is apparent in his method of analysis.[3] He

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[1] The word secularism has been used here not in the sense of the separation of the church and the state but as implying the desire to draw social and wordly implications of theological values and symbols.

[2] Ghosal, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-115. B. M. Barua, *Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, p. 347 : "That the individuals who placed the science of royal polity on an independent footing by gradually separating its province from that of the older legal system were mostly known as Parivrajakas,—the wanderers as distinguished, on one hand, from the Hermits, Ascetics and Recluse philosophers, and on the other hand, from the Brahmans with kingly powers, the Ministers and officers of State, the Mahasalas or teachers of various sciences and arts, and the priests."

[3] Arthasastra i, 4,—एष त्रयीधर्मश्चतुर्णां वर्णानामाश्रमाणां च स्वधर्मस्थापनादौपकारिकः। त्रय्याहि रक्षितो लोकः प्रसीदति न सीदति। स्वधर्मः स्वर्गायानन्त्याय च।

Arthasastra xv, i :—

एवं शास्त्रमिदं युक्तम
अवाप्तौ पालने चोक्तं लोकस्यास्य परस्य च ॥

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1. पुरोहितमुदितोदितकुलशीलं षडङ्गे वेदे दैवे निमित्ते
दण्डनीत्यां चाभिविनीतमापदां दैवमानुषीणां
अथर्वभिरुपायैश्चप्रतिकर्तारं कुर्वीत् । तमाचार्यं शिष्यः
पितरं पुत्रो भृत्यः स्वामिनमिव चानुवर्तेत ।—Arthasastra, i, 9.

Here we find that Kautilya accepts that providential or human calamities could be prevented by the performance of rites and ceremonies described in the Atharvaveda. V. R. R. Dikshitarva, pp. 23-24, *The Mauryan Polity* says : "the religious data afforded by the Arthasastra shows that it belongs to a period when the Vedic religious practices and rituals were in vogue. Great significance is indeed attached to the performance of Yajnas or sacrifices and there is an unreasoned belief in the efficacy and fruitfulness of such sacrifices. Whenever the kingdom or king was visited by Vyasanas or dangers, providentical or otherwise prayers were offered to the Vedic deities like Indra, Varuna, Agni, Asvins, Jayanta and others. Belief was then current that by propitiating these gods calamities of all sorts could be averted, or at least modified to a certain extent. Even the worship of nature and nature deities like the rivers and mountain is seriously recommended. Worship of snakes, rats, and other similar creatures is not unknown. A recommendation is also made for achieving objects desired through spells, incantations, and mystical rites prescribed in the Atharvaveda Samhita."

2. *Politica*, 1324-25, 1332-34 ; *Nicomachean Ethics* 1178b : "Therefore the activity of God, which surpasses all others in blessedness, must be contemplative : and human activities, therefore, that which is most akin to his must be most of the nature of happiness".

3. At several periods in the history of European thought we find discussed the question of the nature of political science. Plato treates metaphysics, mysticism, art, dialectics, laws and politics in the *Republic*. Contrasted to Plato, Aristotle is credited with having raised politics to an independent status. This is only to the extent that Aristotle devotes a separate book to politics, and three other treatises to ethics. Aristotle, as distinguished from Plato, makes an intensive analysis of political matters in an independent and autonomous treatise. Even the *Laws* and the *Statesman* of Plato are not independent treatises on politics in that sense. But Aristotle never repudiates the Hellenic theology and priestcraft. He thoroughly upholds moral objectives in political life. Contrasted to Aristotle, Machiavelli is supposed to have raised politics to the status of an independent science because he divorces ethical considerations from the problems of the seizure and maintenance of political power. Machiavelli and Nietzsche are the two important writers who condemn Christian ethics because it

never refers to Vedic scriptures as authorities on the topics he is discussing.[1] Although he accepts the authority of the Vedas for social matters, in his discussions of kingship, war, diplomacy and espionage he does not quote the Vedic texts but discusses them in a non-theological vein.

Although in subsequent times the differences between Dandaniti and Arthasastra were obliterated,[2] there is the implicit recognition of the difference in Kautilya. We have examined the nature of these two branches of knowledge and we feel that Arthasastra is a wider term than Dandaniti.[3] At best, Dandaniti can be translated as the art of government. But Arthasastra, as we have seen, includes not only discussions about the structure and functions of government but also civil and criminal law,

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is antithetical to political virility. In short, Machiavelli replaces the Aristotelian concept of *Arate* (virtue) with the concept of power.

In recent times the movement of a 'value-free' social science (Wertfreiwissenschaft) started in Germany under the influence of Ritschl's distinction between judgments of fact and judgments of value and the Neo-Kantian axiological epistemology of Rickert and Windelband with its distinction between the nomothetic natural sciences and the idiographic cultural sciences. Some sociologists and political scientists wanted to construct a social and political theory which would only analyse empirical social behavior and the dynamics of concrete social movements. It would be "scientific". Hence the concept of a non-teleological political science was formulated according to which political science would not set up any standards or goals. Even the scientific Machiavelli had set before himself the goal of Italian unification. But against positivist-like Lundberg and Catlin, modern sociologists like Znaniecki, Sorokin, MacIvers Mannheim and others have pleaded for a social science which would not only, study social behaviour but prescribe social and political goals.

[1] However, in the discussions of treacherous fights (कूटयुद्धविकल्पाः) Kautilya prescribes that the army should be encouraged to fight by citing the Vedic authority. He says (Arthasastra, x, 3): — वेदेष्वप्यनुश्रूयते । समाप्तदक्षिणानां यज्ञानामवभृथेषु सा ते गतिर्या शूराणमिति । Before engaging in the actual encounter the king is required to make oblations into the sacrificial fire pronouncing the sacred hymns of the Atharvaveda. Prayers were to be offered for the good of the victors well as for those who attain heaven by renouncing their lives in the battlefield. The king was to dedicate his person to the Brahmins. (अथर्वभिश्च जुहुयात् । विजययुक्ताः स्वर्गीयाश्चाशिषो वाचयेत् । ब्राह्मणेभ्यश्चात्मानमतिसृजेत्) ।

[2] Ksirasvamin, quoted in Ghoshal, *Op. cit.*, p. 78n.

[3] The term राज्यतन्त्र is used for politics in the Nitiprakasika of Vaisampayana (viii, 15):

उच्चासनस्थो नृपतिः राज्यतन्त्रं विचारयेत् ।
धर्मासने समारोप्य विप्रं सृज्ञं पुरोहितम ॥

warfare and international relations and the strategic means to capture a fortress and so forth. Hence we think that according to Kautilya Dandaniti is a part of the wider term Arthasastra.

The Arthasastra does not follow the deductive method. Kautilya does not deduce his political ideas from any theological scripture (although this does not mean that he does not adhere to the canons and criteria of Vedic theology). He does not deduce his political propositions from any more fundamental set of psychological or philosophical axioms. If he cannot be regarded as the upholder of the deductive method in politics, neither can he be considered the protagonist of the logico-analytical method. He does not engage in the systematic theoretical analysis of basic concepts although it is possible that a modern scholar may attempt the reconstruction of a conceptual framework on the basis of the Arthasastra. Kautilya's method in the Arthasastra is twofold. First, he systematises the ideals, notions and wisdom relevant to the political field which were current in those days. This systematisation, rearrangement and comprehensive enumeration can be said to illustrate the synthetic method. But Kautilya does not merely follow the synthetic method. He also follows the inductive method. This second method—the inductive method used by him, has two sub-divisions. The inductive empirical method is illustrated by the vast amount of data, information and facts incorporated in the book. All this must have been collected by the author on the basis of personal observation and observation by his colleagues and friends. But Kautilya also adheres to the inductive historical method. It is very true to say that Kautilya does not use the historical method in the genetic sense of deriving political conclusions and propositions from historical materials. But he certainly uses the historical method in the illustrative fashion of substantiating his ideals by references to personalities and deeds of ancient history. The classic example of the use of the inductive historical method in the illustrative sense is in the famous section on the moral philosophy of kingship. A second example is in the twentieth chapter of the first book. Kautilya prescribes that the king shall maintain an attitude of extreme caution in his behaviour and action in the inner apartments. This intense circumspection is incumbent because "hidden in the queen's chamber, his own brother slew king Bhadrasena ; hiding himself under the bed of his mother, the son killed king Karusa; mixing fried rice with poison as though with honey, his own queen killed Kasiraja ; with an anklet pinted with poison, his own queen killed Varantya ; with a gem of her zone bedaubed with poison his own queen killed Sauvira ; with a looking glass painted with poison, his own queen killed Jalutha ; and with a weapon hidden under her tuft of hair, his own queen slew Viduratha. This use of historical and quasi-historical figures to illustrate a political idea is very significant. In conclusion we may say that Kautilya follows the synthetic and the inductive methods in the Arthasastra.

8. *SANTIPARVA.*

The three classic works which we shall take into account for analyzing the political concepts of the post-Kautilyan period are the Mahabharata, the Manusmriti and the Sukraniti. We shall first of all present an analysis of the concept of Dandaniti according to the Mahabharata. Although usually the Mahabharata is ascribed to a single writer—the celebrated Vyasa, still it is considered a composite work having undergone modifications and revisions by various writers. After the great revival of Brahmanism under the Sungas and the Kanvas there was a tendency to revise the older epics and other great works according to the dominant world-view of Brahmanism.[1] Hence we find in the Mahabharata and in the Manusmriti a great stress on the adherence to the Vedic pattern of life. In this respect they represent much more of the theological outlook than we found in the Arthasastra of Kautilya. The Mahabharata in one of its later books—the Santiparva, treats of political matters.

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[1] H. C. Raychaudhury, *Studies in Indian Antiquities* (Calcutta, 1932), p. 24, says : "The testimony of Panini shows that the Mahabharata was well known to the people of Gandhara from a period long anterior to the time of Heliodors (second century B. C.), while the evidence of the Svargarohana-parva suggests that it used to be recited by Pathakas or Vachakas in the presence of the great men of Taxila......Evidently the Mahabharata played an important part in the Hinduisation of the foreign settlers of the Indian borderland."

The setting and the nomenclature are highly significant.[1] The supposed author of these views on politics is Bhisma—one of the classic teachers and warrior-heroes of ancient India. He is lying on a bed of arrows after the ghastly battle of the Mahabharata in which he had been seriously injured and he is being questioned by Yudhisthira, the hero who had triumphed in the battle. The philosophical discussion of politics thus takes place after the war is finished and the tragic memories are too fresh to be forgotten.[2] Significantly the chapters which deal with politics occur in the book called Santiparva—the book of peace. This obviously implies that politics should lead to peace. The pacifistic orientation derives its heightened importance from the fact that the discusion takes place after the devastating war is finished. This peaceful character of the political teachings is in dominant contrast with the Arthasastra of Kautilya where abundant space was devoted to warfare and espionage.

The Mahabharata expounds the nature of Dandaniti.[3] It ascribes Dandaniti to the great god Brahma.[4] This book composed by Brahma contained one lac chapters (अध्यायसहस्राणां शतम्) It was almost a cosmic encyclopaedia discussing all kinds of topics. This book was abridged by Siva and it came to be called Vaisalaksha. It contained ten thousand chapters. Indra studied this book. He further abridged it and it came to contain five thousand chapters. It came to be known as Bahudantaka. Brishapati further abridged it and he produced a book of three thousand chapters by dint of his intellectual subtlety. Then it began to be called Barhaspatya. Sukra further abridged it into one thousand chapters. Thus the great patriarchal encyclopaedia (पैतामहे शास्त्रे) was being progressively diminished in size because of the incapacity of people to comprehend it. In another place the goddess Saraswati—the goddess of learning—is supposed to have founded this science of Dandaniti.[1] This is called Dandaniti because everything is controlled by Danda. According to Bhisma Dandaniti is a very comprehensive branch of knowledge and discusses the fourfold ends of man—Dharma, Artha, desires and final liberation from nature.[2] If Dandaniti is properly applied by the king it directs the four castes towards Dharma. When the four castes act in conformity with their Dharmas security emerges and people are free from fear. Oftentimes Indian thinkers debated the problem as to whether the king is the creator of the age or the age is the mighty historical force creating the king. Bhisma says that the king is the creator of the age.[3] The Hindu thinkers divide the ages in four. When the king acts wholly in accordance with the norms of Dandaniti the golden age arises. When he acts only threefourths in conformity with the norms and rules of Dandaniti the second, or the silver age (Treta) comes into existance. The brazen age (Dvapara) comes into being when the king only adheres to half of the Dandaniti and renounces the other half. Lastly the iron age (Kali) springs forth when the king gives up the whole of Dandaniti and oppresses the people by recourse to ill-advised and unrighteous techniques. In conformity with the law of Karma whereby each individual has to bear the fruits of his good and evil deeds in the present and future births Bhisma says that the king reaps great virtue for producing the golden age and he reaps correspondingly less reward for having effectuated the existence of silver and brazen ages while he incurs demerits for creating the iron age.

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[1] F. E. Pargiter; "The Nations of India at the Battle between the Pandavas and Kauravas", *J. R. A. S.*, 1908, pp. 333 ff.; *Ibid*; "Ancient Indian Genealogies and Chronology", *J. R A S.*, 1901; Adolf Holtzmann, *Das Mahabharata und seine Teile* (1892-95); J. Dahlmann, *Genesis des Mahabharata* (1899). According to E. J. Rapson, *Ancient India*, p. 72, the predominant religion in the Mahabharata is that of the kingly group or caste.

[2] Lassen and Weber had held that the original Mahabharata was a poem concerning a battle between the Panchalas and the Kurus but this has been controverted by Hopkins. It is totally against the Indian traditional view.

[3] The Mahabharata, Santiparva, translated into English prose by Pratap Chandra Ray (Calcutta, 1890).

[4] Santiparva, lix, 28-79.

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[1] Santiparva, cxxii, 122 ; The Santiparva, lviii, 2-3 gives a list of teachers of political thought :

विशालाक्षाश्च भगवान्काव्यश्चैव महातपाः ।
सहस्राक्षो महेन्द्रश्च तथा प्राचेतसो मनुः ।।
भरद्वाजश्च भगवांस्तथा गौरशिरा मुनिः ।
राजशास्त्रप्रणेतारो ब्रह्मण्या ब्रह्मवादिनः ।।

[2] *Ibid* ; lix.

[3] Cf. the almost similar view of Sukraniti, i, 22:

आचारप्रेरको राजा ह्येतत्कालस्य कारणम् ।
यदि कालः प्रमाणं हि कस्माद्धर्मोऽस्ति कर्तृषु ।।

The monarchical emphasis is strong in all these discussions about the nature of Dandaniti. The exalted view of the purpose and functions of Dandaniti which Bhisma has, reminds us of the views of Usanas according to whom all knowledge is rooted in Dandaniti. The Mahabharata raises Dandaniti to a momentous place when it says : ‘When Dandaniti becomes lifeless, the triple Veda sinks, all the Dharmas howsoever developed, completely perish. When traditional Rajadharma is departed from, all the bases of the divisions of the Ashramas are shattered. In Rajadharma are realized all the forms of renunciation, in Rajadharma is revealed all knowledge. In Rajadharma are centred all the worlds.[1]

Here the Mahabharata interchangeably uses Dandaniti and Rajadharma. The concept of Rajadharma will be analyzed later. But we would only like to indicate here the comprehensiveness of the functions of Dandaniti because all social, intellectual and spiritual ends are dependent on the functioning of Dandaniti. This would imply that Dandaniti is not only the art of punishment in a physical sense but regulates the principles of social and political existence.

9. *THE MANUSMRITI*

With the Manusmriti, we pass to one of the most important books in the whole of Hindu literature.[2] Manu is one of the traditional lawgivers of antiquity like Hammurabi, Moses, Lycurgus, or Solon. He is supposed to be the primeval founder of the human race. It is likely that the book, as we have it today, is by some writer of pronounced Brahmanical views who put in the name of Manu to make the book famous.[1] Smriti literally means recollection or memory, hence it means a book collecting together what was so far only in the memory of the race.[2] According to the orthodox tradition Smriti is a systematic concise

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[1] Santivara, lxii, 28-29. English translation by the writer.

[2] According to Schlegel the Manusmriti is prior to 1000 B. C. Weber considers it post-Mahabharatan. According to Burnell it is a work of the Manava school, a section of the Maitrayani Sakha of the Krishna Yajurveda. We have references to Manu in the Rigveda, viii, 27; ii, 33, 13; i, 124, 2. Ketkar's idea that Manu is at least as old as the third century A. D. as stated in his *History of Caste in India* has been criticised by Hopkins. According to Max Muller the Manusmriti is posterior to the fourth century A. D. but George Buhler after a careful study of all available sources opines that this work as extant existed in the second century A. D. Julius Jolly also holds that the Manusmriti cannot belong to the period beyond the second or third century A. D. The name of Manu appears many times in the Mahabharata.

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[1] According to Manusmriti the Brahmin because of his birth from the mouth of the Lord is by right the master of the whole creation (सर्वस्यैवास्य सर्गस्य धर्मतो ब्राह्मणः प्रभुः). The Brahmin is declared to be the most excellent of all men. The gods consume the sacrificial offerings through the mouth of the Brahmin. "The very birth of a Brahmin is an eternal incarnation of the sacred law, for he is born to fulfil the sacred law and becomes one with God". The Brahmin is there for the protection of the treasury of the law. (धर्मकोशस्य गुप्तये). The Manusmriti marks the culmination of the claims of Brahmanical supremacy when it says that "whatever exists in the world is the property of the Brahmin; on account of the excellence of his origin the Brahmin is, indeed, entitled to it all."—

सर्वं स्वं ब्राह्मणस्येदं यत्किंचिज्जगतीगतम् ।
श्रैष्ठ्येनाभिजनेनेदं सर्वं वै ब्राह्मणोऽर्हति ।।
स्वमेव ब्राह्मणो भुङ्क्ते स्वं वस्त्रे स्वं ददाति च ।
आनृशंस्याद् ब्राह्मणस्य भुञ्जते हीतरे जनाः ।।

—Manusmriti, i, 100-101.

[2] वेदोऽखिलो धर्ममूलं स्मृतिशीले च तद्विदाम् ।
आचारश्चैव साधूनामात्मनस्तुष्टिरेव च ।।
श्रुतिस्मृत्युदितं धर्ममनुतिष्ठन् हि मानवः ।
इह कीर्तिमवाप्नोति प्रेत्य चानुत्तमं सुखम् ।।
श्रुतिस्तु वेदो विज्ञेयो धर्मशास्त्रं तु वै स्मृतिः ।
ते सर्वार्थेष्वमीमांस्ये ताभ्यां धर्मो हि निर्बभौ ।।
वेदः स्मृतिः सदाचारः स्वस्य च प्रियमात्मनः ।
एतच्चतुर्विधं प्राहुः साक्षाद्धर्मस्य लक्षणम् ।।

Manusmriti ii, 6, 9, 10, 12.

Medhatilthi commenting upon these verses states with reference to स्मृतिः—"अनुभूतार्थविषयं विज्ञानं स्मृतिरुच्यते ।......................ये स्मरन्ति तेषामाद्यमेव तत्र शब्दादि प्रमाणं नात्भीया स्मृतिः । अस्माकं तु मन्वादि स्मृतिरेव प्रमाणम् । न हि वयं तामन्तरेणान्यतोऽष्टकादिकर्तव्यतामवगच्छामः । तच्च मन्वादीनामीदृशं स्मरणं तत्कृतेभ्यो वाक्येभ्यः स्मृतिपरम्परायातेभ्यो-

statement of the Vedic teaching. It is authoritative only to the extent that it conforms to the Vedic tradition. The Vedas have original authority. The Smriti is only a secondarily authoritative work. The seers and teachers credited with having composed works on Dharmasutras and Smritis or Dharmasastras are Manu, Yajnvalkya, Vasistha, Gautama, Vyasa, Katyayana, Atri, Visnu, Satatapa, Daksha, Parasara, Samkha, Likhita, Apastamba, Harita, Angiras, Yama, Narada, Usanas, Samvarta, etc. The two most famous Smritis are those of Manu and Yajnavalkya.[1]

The code of Manu is primarily a book on Hindu social relations. Manu accepts the authenticity of the Vedic sacrificial cult. In the first chapter of the book he deals with the problem of creation. Manu accepts the Vedic cosmology with some admixture of Samkhya metaphysics about primeval nature. Chapters two to six of the book deal with the four Ashramas of a Brahmin's life. Manu is emphatic about the performance of social duties. He reacts against an exaggerated asceticism and monasticism which had begun to have a dominant spell since the days of Buddhism. Chapter seven of the book deals with Rajadharma. We shall analyze this concept later. In this chapter he also includes the discussion of the art of war and pleads for moderation in the actual conduct of a war. The eighth chapter deals with Vyavahara—civil and criminal

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ऽवसीयते। तस्माच्च स्मरणादनुभुतोऽयमर्थः प्रमाणेन मन्वादिभिरिति निश्चिनुमो। निबद्धाक्षरा हि स्मृतयः प्रसिद्धाः। अतस्तस्य स्मृतित्वमुपपादयति...यत्रः धर्मः शिष्यते कर्तव्यतया प्रतीयते सा स्मृति...।...शिष्टसमाचारादपि धर्मस्य कर्तव्यतावगतिः। सोऽपि स्मृतिरेव। ...यत्रश्रूयते धर्मानुशासनशब्दः सा श्रुतिः। यत्र च स्मर्यते सा स्मृतिः। तच्च समाचारेऽण्यस्तीत्ययः सोऽपि स्मृतिरेव।"

Accepting the co-ordinate authority of the स्मृति, along with the Vedas Kumarila says :

वेदो हीदृश एवायं पुरूषैर्यः प्रकाश्यते ।
स पठद्भिः प्रकाश्येत स्मरद्भिर्वाति तुल्यभाक् ॥
तेनार्थं कथयद्भिर्या स्मृतार्था कथ्यते श्रुतिः ।
पठिताभिः समानोऽसौ केनन्यायेन वाध्यते ॥

[1] Hopkins and Jolly place Yajnavalkya in the 4th century A. D. He is supposed to belong to Mithila in North Bihar.

law.[1] Chapters nine to twelve deal with the duties and functions of the various castes, penances and transmigration.

Thus we see that the Smriti of Manu only incidentally deals with things political.[2] It is primarily concerned with social relations and conduct. Its view of law is also colored by its preponderant Brahmanical standpoint. It does not mark any advance in the formulation of concepts of philosophy or specifically of political philosophy.[3] We have referred earlier to Manu's notion of Danda. Besides anthropomorphising Danda by investing it with a personality[4] and divine birth, Manu does deepen our notion of Danda in a sociological way.

Manu says that if the king did not wield the sceptre of

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1. Manu is a strong advocate of truth and he wants that false evidence should never be given. The following verses from the Manusmriti indicate that as yet no conception of positive law was attained :

"A witness who speaks the truth in his evidence gains after death the most excellent regions of bliss and here below unsurpassable fame ; such testimony is revered by Brahman himself. He who gives false evidence is firmly bound by Varuna's fetters... The soul itself is the witness of the soul, and the soul is the refuge of the soul, despise not thy own soul, the supreme witness of men... The sky, the earth, the waters, the moon, the sun, the fire, Yama and the wind, the night, the two twillights and justice know the conduct of all corporeal beings."—Manusmriti viii, 81-86.

2. Cf. N. C. Sen Gupta, *Sources of Law and Society in Ancient India* (Calcutta, 1914), pp. 58-59; "The transformation of Smriti into a technical term is as little surprising as the canonisation of the great teachers. What happened in India, happened also at Rome,……Thus while the authority of the secularised law of Rome passed gradually to the people, the religious philosophy gave an opposite turn to the law in India and it passed entirely into the hands of a privileged class of specialists. To be in keeping with the religious origin of law it was necessary that the man who had practically acquired the power of making or moulding of law should acquire a high spiritual status. We find therefore that, wherever a law is received from human hands, divinity or divine inspiration must be imputed to him. The teachers of law must be semi-divine like Manu or great seers."

Refering to the tradition of freedom in ancient India, K. P. Jayaswal, *History of India* (Lahore, 1933), p. 49, says : "This politico-geographical idea of 'legitimacy' of the Hindu sovereign in Aryavarta, which we may call Aryavartism, is laid down in the Manava Dharmasastra (ii, 22-23), and is traceable from the time of Patanjali (180 B. C.) down to Medhatithi (आक्रम्याक्रम्य न चिरम् तत्र म्लेच्छाः स्थातारो भवन्ति), and to Visaladeva (1164 A. D.) as a living belief."

3 In Manusmriti, vii, 56, occurs the word Sthana (स्थान). According to Kulluka Bhatta it stands for army, treasury, town and the kingdom—

स्थानं दण्डकोशपुरराष्ट्रात्मकम् चतुर्विधम् ।

4. Cf. the Mahabharata, Santiparva, cxx, 8-16, for the anthropomorphic conception of Danda.

punishment then "the stronger would roast the weaker, like fish on a spit." He thinks that the gods, the Danavas, the Gandharvas, the Rakshasas, the bird and snake deities even give the enjoyments (due from them) only, if they are tormented by the fear of punishment. Danda cannot be inflicted justly by one who has no assistant nor by a fool, nor by a covetous person, nor by a person of unchastened mind nor by one addicted to sensual gratifications. Only he who is faithful and acts according to the injunctions of the Shashtras can inflict punishment with justice. Hence moral self-restraint is essential for using Danda. According to Manu, Danda has been created for the sake of the king and is the son of the Lord. It (Danda) is the protector of all creatures and is formed of the glory of Brahman. All creatures, immovable and movable stick to their Dharma only out of the fear of Danda. Hence the Danda should be administered by the king with the full consideration of the time and the place (of the offence) and the strength and the knowledge (of the offender). Danda should be always used with discrimination and moderation. In reality Danda is the king, the manager of affairs, the ruler and the guarantee for the observance of Dharma by the four orders. Danda alone governs and protect and keeps watch over the people. Manu advances in the direction of an organic conception of Danda and ascribes the masculine character to Danda. He stresses that only due to the operative mechanism of Danda the social castes are maintained in purity. Only "where Danda with a black hue and red eyes stalks about destroying sinners there the subjects are not disturbed; provided that he who inflicts it discerns well." Danda is full of lustre and cannot be wielded by a person of unregenerate mind. Hence Manu advocates that the king should be pure, truthful, devoted to the concept and practice of justice and should be rigorous in chastising the enemies. The supremacy of Danda is effectively brought about by Manu when he says that if the king desisted from wielding punishment then the crow would eat the sacrificial cake and the dog would lick the sacrificial viands and onwnership would not remain with any one. Thus Danda is the source of the preservation of social relations and property organization.

Manu presents a very exalted conception of Danda. He emphatically enunciates the role of Danda in the maintenance of social cohesion and political order. But he is no less emphatic on the moral roots of political authority. Only that king can exercise political supremacy who has mastered his lower passions and self. Manu refers to the tenfold set of vices resulting from Kama (lust and passion) : hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, indulgence, drunkenness, inordinate love of dancing, singing and music and useless travel. Tale-bearing, violence, treachery, envy, slandering, illegal confiscation of property, reviling and assault are the eightfold set of vices produced by wrath (Krodha). Hence Manu advocates that the king should practise great self-restraint. The tremendous emphasis on the suppression of the lower passions of the empirical ego put by Manu reminds us of the similar emphasis on the practice of virtue put by Plato for the philosopher-guardians. Hindu writers on political thought stress that it is the Dharma of the king to acquire and to expand his territorial domains but in their concern with the game of a sometimes ruthless imperialistic diplomacy they never lose sight of the fact that even for the sake of political success it is essential to control one's lower appetites and senses. Thus the conception of the rootedness of political authority in the discipline of the senses is a great contribution of the Hindu political writers.

10. *THE SUKRANITI*

The Sukraniti,[1] like the code of Manu, does not make any conceptual advance over the Arthasastra of Kautilya. Here we like only to discuss the exalted notion of Niti which Sukra has because an analysis of the concept of Niti is important for grasping the ideas of the Hindu writers about political and social things. It is difficult to translate the word Niti. Ghoshal translates it with polity but obviously Sukra is not concerned with the administrative mechanism of any specific governmental system. Sarkar means by it a system of morals.[1] I think this rendering would imply that the book of Sukra is a systematic treatise on ethics which definitely it is not. Niti deals with social and political questions. The practical note is implicit in the term Niti. Perhaps a statement about the contents of the book would serve to clarify the notion of Niti. Chapter one of the book discusses the duty of princes. The second chapter deals with the functions of the crown prince and other government officials. The third chapter formulates general rules of conduct. The fourth chapter is a composite one and deals with problems like characteristics of a friend, treasure, arts and sciences or branches of knowledge, social customs and institutions, functions of the king, fortresses and the army. This sketch is enough to convince any reader that we do not get in the book of Sukra any philosophical analysis of the problems of ethics. He is concerned with giving general rules of policy for political and social behaviour. The fifth chapter is supplementary and deals with miscellaneous topics.[2]

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[1] Sukranitisara, edited by Gustav Oppert (Madras, 1882). According to Jayaswal the Sukraniti should be placed in the 8th century A.D. Gustav Oppert was of opinion that this work "belonged to the same period which produced the Smriti and the early epic literature. In the fourth chapter this book contains reference to tubular or cylindrical instrument (नालिका अस्त्र), and since guns began to be used in the early modern period hence the work has been ascribed to the 16th century. The place of the origin of gunpowder has not been conclusively decided. I propose to ascribe the work to the late medieval period, although the fundamental concepts and ideas of the book belong to earlier political traditions.

The pragmatic character of the book is apparent in Sukra's statement that a person can do without grammar, logic and Vedanta, but not without Niti.[3] Other branches of knowledge are concerned with certain limited functions and interests while Niti is helpful to all people. It is as indispensable to the social order as food is to the human body,[1] and on this pragmatic orientation rests its superiority over the theoretical branches of knowledge mentioned above. The main duty of a king is the protection of subjects and penalization of the wicked and this function cannot be performed without the assistance of Niti. If a king becomes arbitrary and refuses to act in accordance with Niti he suffers pain, increases his enemies and weakens his power.[2] The writer of the Sukraniti exalts the significance of Nitisastra to Olympian height. He considers it as the foundation of Dharma, Artha and aesthetic-appetitive interests (Kama). It is regarded as the giver of emancipation (मोक्षप्रद). It prescribes the rules and maxims for the conquest of adversaries and for winning the affections and satisfactions of the people. It conduces to the realization of the wishes and interests of all and hence has won universal approbation (सर्वसंमतम्). If the king fails to conform to the maxims of Niti, then this results in the disintegration of the kingdom, the disorganization of the army and confusion among the administrative staff. If the king adheres to the code of Niti, he is respected but if he transgresses it then his prestige declines (स्वाराध्यो नीतिमान् राजा दुराराध्यसत्वनीतिमान्). But Sukra must not be imagined to be an advocate only of the rules of Niti. He is a realist and he also realizes the significance of power in the political and economic processes. Hence for the realization of universal prosperity he recommends both Niti and power (यत्र नीतिबले चोभे तत्र श्रीस्सर्वतोमुखी). The king, therefore, according to Sukra, should wield the sceptre of Danda and be an adherent of the paths leading to the maximization of intelligence, power, vigor and Niti. By the deteminating influence of Niti, power and wealth it may be possible to capture and suppress even the sub-human living species (तिर्यंञ्चोपि वशं यान्ति).

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[1] Benoy Kumar Sarkar, *The Sukra Niti* (Allahabad, 1914), p. 1.

[2] Benoy Sarkar in his book *Political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus* seems to attribute superlative theoretical importance to the Sukraniti. He says: "......the Sukraniti is almost synonymous with *staatswissenschaft* or political philosophy in the scientific tradition of India". (p. 159). He further states : "Niti-sastra in the hands of Sukra assumes thereby the proportions not of ethics or politics in the circumscribed sense, but of sociology in the wide sense of Aristotle's 'architechtonic' or dominant science". (p. 163). The very fact that Sarkar sometimes uses system of morals, sometimes political philosophy and somethimes sociology to indicate the meaning of Niti-sastra is evidence of the fact that he is using these terms not in a scientifically precise and logical sense but in a vaguely general manner. Cf. also the Bhagavadgita, X, 38, नीतिरस्मि जिगीषताम्।

[3] Sukranitisara, i, 7-9;

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[1] *Ibid* ; i, 45 ; i, 7-11.
Cf. Brihaspatisutram, नीतिः किल नदीतीरतरुवत् ।—i, 102 ; नीतेः फलं धर्मार्थकामावाप्ति ।—ii, 43.

[2] *Ibid.*, i, 5-6 ; 14-16. According to Sukra the absence of Nitisastra is the occasion of dangers for the king (राज्ञो नित्यं भयावहम् । शत्रुसंवर्धनं प्रोक्तंबलह्रासकारकम्). Service to a king who transgresses the rules of Niti is like licking the keen edge of the sword (स्वतन्त्रप्रभुसेवा तुह्यसिधारावलेहनम्).

We have analyzed in this chapter some of the basic concepts of Hindu political philosophy. We have discussed the meanings of Brahma and Kshatra, Danda and Dandaniti, Artha and Arthasastra and the meanings of Smriti and Niti in a political context.[1] We have seen how the fundamental concepts of Brahma, Kshatra, Bala, Sakti, Artha, Kama, etc., are formulated by the Hindu philosophers. Some of these concepts like Brahma, Kama and Sakti have a momentous significance in Hindu philosophy and theology. We cannot discuss these developments here. The concepts of Danda, Dandaniti and Niti or Nitisastra were formulated by political thinkers[2] who also incorporated in their systems some of the basic concepts developed by the philosophers. This kind of conceptual study of political thought is important because thus we arrive at the basic notions of the authors. Concepts indicate the power of theoretical generalization and abstraction of the authors. Hence it is essential for gaining an insight into the minds of thinkers to isolate their concepts. It is clear that the interpretation of Hindu political thought in terms of a non-Hindu conceptual structure will fail to provide the necessary grasp. In the next chapter we shall analyze perhaps the most important concept in the realm of Hindu social and political thought---the concept of Dharma.

1. According to Kamandaka, Arthasastra is the great sea and Nitisastra is the nectar. He says :

नीतिशास्त्रामृतं श्रीमानर्थशास्त्रमहोदधेः ।
य उद्दध्र नमस्तस्मै विष्णुगुप्ताय वेधसे ॥

He also uses the term राजविद्या—

दर्शनात् तस्य सुदृशो विद्यानां पारदृश्वनः ।
राजविद्याप्रियतया संक्षिप्तग्रन्थमर्थवत् ॥

—Kamaṇdikiya-Nitisastra, i, 6 and 7.

2. Besides the texts and books discussed in this chapter there are some other works on Hindu social and political thought. Some of the important ones are :—

(i) Arthasastra of Brihaspati.
(ii) Nitisara of Kamandaka (a close student of the Arthasastra of Kautilya).
(iii) Nitivakyamrita of Somadeva (10th century A.D.).
(iv) Yuktikalpataru of Bhoja.
(v) Rajnitiratnakara of Chandeshvara.
(vi) Rajnitiprakasha of Mitramishra.
(vii) Nitimayukha of Nilakantha.
(viii) Nitiprakashika attributed to Vaisampayana.
(ix) The Sutras attributed to Chanakya.

CHAPTER III

NATURE OF THE CONCEPT OF DHARMA AND ITS INFLUENCE ON HINDU POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

1. *INTRODUCTION*

The historical growth of cultures is an interesting topic for evolutionary sociology and anthropology. Cultures grow through a process of increasing complexity, heterogeneity, differentiation and integration. We can study the process of cultural progression in the histories of Egypt and Babylonia, China and India, Crete and Asia Minor. Slow advance and at times rapid leaps, can be deciphered in this long and vast process. It is possible to unravel some dominant and powerful ideas and concepts behind this complex organisation of material instrumentalities and axiological norms and patterns of action and behaviour. The organic interdependence and intersubjective relationships characterizing different cultures are not accidental and arbitrary. The cultural configuration and the social physiognomy represent the concretisation of some powerful world-idea. We find in Hindu scriptures the conception that terrestrial history represents a clash and ceaseless conflict between the ideas of Dharma and Adharma. History is a perpetual tension and battle between the moral, idealistic and spiritual forces represented by the idea of Dharma and the unregenerate forces of darkness, lust and evil represented by Adharma. Eventual triumph belongs to Dharma. Hence according to the Hindu philosophical and social speculations history is the progressive attempt at the modelisation, idealization and incorporation of Dharma in individual, collective and spiritual life and experience. Throughout its long history of several thousand years Indian culture has been growing and has acquired a very differentiated and variegated structural form. It is vast and powerful in terms of its historical span and its large socio-economic and religious formations. To unravel the secrets of this culture and its political philosophy and orientation it is necessary to analyse the concept of Dharma which is almost monumental in the richness and comprehensiveness of the significance which it has had in the course of Indian history, ethics, culture and politics.

2. *PHILOSOPHY OF DHARMA IN THE VEDIC LITERATURE*

Dharma is perhaps the most comprehensive concept in the entire history of Hindu thought.[1] It has been used and understood since the days of the Rigveda[2] down to our own. No adequate rendering of this term is possible in any modern language. Usually in modern times we find it translated by the word religion, but we consider it an unhappy rendering since religion signifies faith in a certain theology and at the same time it also implies certain sacraments, an institutionalized ecclesiastical hierarchy and a sense of common belongingness.[3] The word

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[1] G. H. Mees, *Dharma and Society*, pp. 8-9 has listed up the several implications and meanings of Dharma.

Dharma sometimes was :

(i) Something like the old Rita;
(ii) The morally proper, the ethical duty, virtue ;
(iii) Good works ;
(iv) Religious duty, religious virtue ;
(v) The ideal ;
(vi) Identical with God and absolute truth; a universal law or principle;
(vii) Divine justice;
(viii) A compromise between the ideal and actual conditions ;
(ix) Convention ; a code of customs and traditions ;
(x) Common law or law ;
(xi) International or inter-tribal law.

These several and diverse meanings do not signify any lack of the logical faculty of discrimination but indicate the dominance of a principle or primeval norm. Mees says that the Greeks, the Hindus, the Hebrews and the Romans "in the dawn of their great cultures saw life as a whole, saw the inner and outer world as one, recognized not only, but realized the underlying law or principle". (p. 43, *Ibid*). Jhering has pointed to the conformity between Dharma, *Mischpat, Dike,* The Latin *Fas* has also a similar meaning.

[2] R. V. i, 22, 18 ; i, 164, 43, 50 ; iii, 3, i ; iii, 60, 6 ; V, 26, 6, etc.

[3] The word religion is derived from the Latin *religare*, to bind, meaning that religion is the bond between God and man. According to Cicero *religio* comes from *religere*, which signifies a watchful care. The term religion has been variously defined. According to Kant religion depends on a "a sense of our duties as based on divine law." "Religion" says Schleiermacher "consists of an absolute sense of our dependence". Tylor, the British anthropologist defines it as a "belief in spiritual being". Hegel offers a sophisticated definition of religion as the synthesis of the subject and the object and as belonging to the realm of the abosolute mind. Whitehead asserts that religion is an attempt

Dharma, on the other hand, does not mean any of these things. It stands for a way, a path of life rather than for theology and institutions.

The philosophical analysis of this term is essential to grasp adequately the ancient Hindu way of thinking and to enable us to examine with greater clarity such views, advanced by modern Indian scholars, as Dharma was sovereign in ancient India or Dharma is natural law, etc.[1]

The word Dharma is derived from the root Dhri which means to sustain or uphold. Hence it means the principle or the substance which can sustain any object.[2] An intensive analysis of this term, both from the philosophical and the historical standpoints, will clarify it further. In a few passages of the Rigveda the word appears to signify upholder or supporter.[3] Quite frequently in the Rigveda this word means ordinances or laws.[4] We also find reference to primeval or ancient ordinances. In the Yajurveda we have the idea of a fixed or unshakable Dharma.[5] This meaning of ordinance or law or sustainer has no moral sense attached to it in the Vedic period. But during the Vedic age there was another word Rita which had a partial moral content. Rita stands for order. It meant the fixed and

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to incorporate conceptual non-temporal generality into the insistent particularity of emotions. (*Process and Reality*, p. 23). A definition of religion fitting the concept of Christian theology is offered by Hegel, (*Philosophy of Religion*), Berdyaev, Barth, etc. An anthropological and sociological orientation to the topic is evident in the writings of Engels, Spencer, Max Weber, E. Troeltch, R. Tawney, Werner Sombart, etc.

[1] *Benoy Sarkar, The Political Institutions and Theories of the Hindus* (Leipzig, 1922), pp. 207-210.

[2] ध्रुवां भूमिं पृथिवीं धर्मणा धृताम् ।—A. V. xii, 17.

इषेपिन्वस्वोर्जे पिन्वस्व ब्रह्मणे पिन्वस्व क्षत्राय पिन्वस्व द्यावापृथिवीभ्यां पिन्वस्व । धर्मासि सुधर्मा मेन्यस्मे नृम्णानि धारय ब्रह्म धारय क्षत्रं धारय विशं धारय ।—V. S. xxxviii, 14.

धारणाद्धर्ममित्याहुः धर्मो धारयते प्रजाः ।
यत्स्यात् धारणसंयुक्तः स धर्म इति निश्चयः ।

—MBH, Karnaparva, LXIX, 59.

[3] R. V., i, 187, 1 ; x, 92, 2.

[4] *Vedic Index*, I, 390 ; Keith, *op. cit.*, p. 249.

[5] V. S., x 29 ; V. S., xv, 61.

established course of natural objects like the sun, moon, morning, evening, day and night. But besides, signifying the physical order of the universe and the regular order of the ritualistic sacrificialism which developed in the Vedic and post-Vedic age, the word also received a moral content when the belief grew that the transgression of the Rita is a sin and has to be expiated by prayers to the god Varuna.[1] According to Max Muller, Rita was regarded in the Vedic days as the "straight line which, in spite of many momentary deviations, was discovered to run through the whole realm of nature. We call that Rita, that straight, direct or right line, when we apply it in a more general sense, the Law of Nature ; and when we apply it to the moral world, we try to express the same idea again by speaking of the Moral Law, the law on which our life is founded, the eternal Law of Right and Reason, or it may be that which makes for righteousness both within us and without... (Rita is) a law that underlies everything, a law in which we may trust, whatever befall, a law which speaks within us with the divine voice of conscience and tells us 'this is rite', 'this is right', 'this is true', whatever the statutes of our ancestors or ever the voices of our bright gods, may say to the contrary".[2] According to Rudolf Otto, the word Rita comes from the root Ar, to arrange, to order, to regulate (German : ordnen). As an ordering principle it was to be found in the life of family, the clan and the tribe.[3] The comprehensiveness of the field of operation of Rita was evident in the notion that both gods[4] and men were bound by it.[5]

[1] Keith, *op. cit*,. pp. 83-84 ; Sayana translates ऋत with 'truth', 'sacrifice' and sometimes with 'water'.

[2] Max Muller, *Hibbert Lectures and India, What Can It Teach Us*, quoted in G. H. Mees, *Dharma and Society* pp. 9-10.

[3] Quoted in G. H. Mees, *Dharma and Society*, p. 10.

[4] R. V., ix, 7, 1 ; R. V., i, 65, 3 ; R. V. iv, 3, 9-12.

[5] परि द्यावापृथिवी सद्य इत्वा परिलोकान्परिदिशः परि स्वः ।
ऋतस्य तन्तुं विततं विचृत्य तदपश्यत्तदभवत्तदासीत् ।
—V. S. xxxii, 12.
ऋतेन मित्रावरुणावृतावृधावृतस्पृशा । ऋतुं बृहन्तमाशाथे ।
—R. V. 1, 2, 8.
रथीर्ऋतस्य बृहतो बभूथ । —R. V. iv, 10, 2.

During the Vedic period, as appears from a hymn of the Atharvaveda the two concepts of Rita and Dharma were distinct.[1] Gradually the concept of Rita became less important. It signifies truth in later literature but its Vedic importance was definitely lost. The moral significance that it had was slowly attached to the concept of Dharma which by far became the more important and meaningful concept. It is difficult to trace the process through which the notion of Rita mingled with Dharma but the mixture was intensely important because it lent to Dharma some sort of a moral meaning. During the Vedic period the word Dharma signified only ordinance and law but due to the fusion with Rita it came also to signify virtue or morality.

What has been said above about Dharma in the Vedic age is important to show the historical growth of the content of the word and should dispel some current notions about the political influence of Dharma as we shall see. In the Aitareya Brahmana the king is called the protector of Dharma.[2] The disregard of the historical development of the meaning of Dharma has led to gross misinterpretation of this phrase, "protector of Dharma." "The connection of the State with Dharma in the Brahmanic period was of a peculiar kind. The religious rites and ceremonies, and the ethical rules of conduct, were settled and declared by the Brahmans. In these matters the State did not interfere. But it was the duty of the King and his officials to enforce the observance by the people of their respective duties.

ऋतस्य पन्थामन्वेति साधु प्रजानतीव न दिशो मिनाति ।
—R. V. i, 124, 3.
ऋतस्य देवीः सदसो बुधानाः । —R. V. iv, 51, 8.
भद्रा ऋतजातसत्याः । —R. V. iv, 51, 7.
व्युषा आवो दिविजा ऋतेन आविष्कृण्वाना महिमानमागात् ।
—R. V. vii, 75, 1.
प्रब्रह्मैतु सदनाद् ऋतस्य विरश्मिभिः ससृजे सूर्यो गाः ।
—R. V. vii, 36, 1.
ऋतस्य प्रेषा ऋतस्यधीतिविश्वायुर्विश्वे, अपांसि चक्रुः ।
—R. V. i, 68, 3.

ऋतस्य बोध्यतचित् स्वाधीः, R. V. iv, 3, 4; Sri Aurobindo interprets ऋतचित् as Truth-consciousness or Supermind.

[1] A. V., xi, 9, 17.

[2] A. B. viii, 26.

The King was thus the protector, but not the head, of religion".[1] Banerjea's interpretation is incorrect for two reasons. First, it interprets a theoretical statement about the king being the protector of Dharma as indicating a concrete historical situation. The Satapatha, the Aitareya and the other Brahmanas do contain historical references and illustrations but are not books of history and administration. This interpretation is wrong, secondly, because, without any documentation and in complete disregard of Hindu religious history and traditions, it calls the king the protector of religion. The Vedic and post-Vedic concept of Dharma does not mean religion. Hence we would propose that the phrase "protector of Dharma" means no more than the idea that the king was considered to be the protector of social and moral principles. From the very nature of the case it is self-evident that the king could protect only the overt, the generalized and the institutionalized aspects of social and moral conduct and principles. The inwardness and the spontaneity of social and moral conduct could not be amenable to political control.

The Satapatha Brahmana substantiates our point that due to the fusion with the concept of Rita, Dharma gained a moral content. It calls the king the upholder of Dharma[2] and from that the implication is drawn that he is to do and speak only that which is right.[3] Thus the notion that the king should not act arbitrarily is gradually developing. Sinha has fallen into the same confusion as Banerjea by constructing this phrase "upholder of Dharma" as the description of a historical situation.[4] As we see it both the Aitareya notion of the king being the protector of Dharma and the Satapatha view of the king as the upholder of Dharma simply connote the association of kingship with the concept of Dharma which had gained a moral connotation by being identified with truth and by being linked up with the notion of Rita.

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1. Banerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 276.
2. S. B., v, 4, 5 ; v, 3, 3, 5.
3. *Ibid.*, T. B. i, 8, 10, 1-6.
4. Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

In the Upanishads the notion of Dharma was further elaborated : "Brahman was not strong enough. So he created still further the most excellent Dharma. Dharma is the force of force or power of power. There is nothing higher than Dharma. Henceforth even a weak man rules a stronger person with the help of Dharma, as with (the help of) a king. This Dharma is (equivalent to) truth. Hence if a man speaks the truth they say he speaks the Dharma and if he speaks the Dharma they say he speaks the truth."[1] This passage is remarkable for several reasons. It has had an unusual influence on Hindu political thought and practice. Like the Satapatha it equates Dharma with truth. So far, in the Vedas and the Brahmanas, truth was conceived mainly though not exclusively as a metaphysical concept—the truth of things or their objective existence.[2] This metaphysical and ontological notion of truth as "being" received its classic formulation in the Upanishadic and the Vedantic view that Brahman or the absolute is truth. But simultaneously the notion was growing, perhaps in the Vedas, definitely in the Brahmanas, that truth is also a moral category and hence speaking the truth was considered a great moral act. This view of the moral conception of truth was emphasized by the Upanishads, Buddhism, the Yoga philosophy of Patanjali and the Puranas and other systems. By equating the ideas of truth and Dharma the passage quoted above marks a further step in the moralization of the notion of Dharma. In the Mundakopanishad, truth has been definitely conceived to be a moral category. This incorporation of a moral content in the concept of truth is a symbol of the progressive evolution of ethical ideas. If indicates that reality itself was now conceived in moral and ethical terms. Reality according to the Upanishads is not a

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1. Brihadaranyaka Upanishad i, 4, 14;

According to the Mahānārāyana Upanishad, xvi, 6. the whole universe is encircled by Dharma. According to the Brihadaranyaka iv, 4, 5, the Atman is regarded as the essence of everything of Dharma and of Adharma.

2. सत्यं बृहदृतमुग्रं दीक्षा तपो ब्रह्म यज्ञः पृथिवीं धारयन्ति ।—A. V. xii, 1.

In the A. B., iii, 6, Hiranyadanta Baida is quoted as maintaining that heaven rests on the atmosphere, the atmosphere on the earth, the earth on waters, the waters on truth, truth on the Brahma, and the Brahma on Tapas.

featureless indeterminate absolute but is resonant and vibrant with a moral element. Thus reality or truth as reality, is regarded not merely as being but as also value-impregnated. The identification of Dharma and truth (satyam) shows that the former (Dharma) has the nature of both reality and value.

Secondly, the passage is emphatic in its enunciation of the supremacy of Dharma over mere physical or military strength—Kshatra. We have already analyzed the concept of Kshatra. Kshatra is a significant element in human life and according to the Brahmanas an integral force in the political and social structure. But Dharma is superior to Kshatra. It is the highest principle since with its help even a physically weak person can wield authority over a more powerful one. This notion which inculcates the superiority of Dharma over physical force has had a great influence on Hindu political history. Since the Vedic days the notion that the authority connoted and symbolized by the words Brahma, Śatya or truth and Dharma is higher than physical force has never left the Hindu mind in spite of several political vicissitudes.[1] In our analysis of Hindu social structure we have seen that social primacy belongs not to the Kshatriyas—the wielders of political and physical force but to the Brahmins who are to cultivate the force of Brahma. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad thus formulates the classic idea of Dharma as the guiding force in socio-political life and indirectly implies that social and political institutions are meant for the realization of Dharma.

The Upanishads put forward another meaning of Dharma—the duties of the particular castes and orders. "There are three branches of Dharma, one is (constituted by) sacrifice, study and charity (i.e., stage of the householder); the second is (constituted by) austerities (i.e., the stage of being a hermit); the third is the brahmacarin dwelling in the house of his teacher and making himself stay with the family of his teacher till the last; all these attain to the worlds of meritorious men ; one who abides

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[1] A sociological study of the moral and religious foundations of the Bengal Swadeshi movement and the Satyagraha movement of Mahatma Gandhi would corroborate my statement.

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finally in Brahman attains immortality."[1] The four Ashramas into which the life of an orthodox Hindu is divided have been analyzed earlier. Here we find that each particular Ashrama is given its own particular Dharma. This notion of "one's own Dharma" is the great theme of the Bhagavadgita. Dharma is used in the sense of duty or vocation in the whole of the Dharmasastra literature. We find this idea emphatically stated also by Kautilya and Manu. This meaning of Dharma as duty shows that the concept of Dharma was being given a great sociological significance. The identification of Dharma with social duties implies the conception of Dharma as immanent in the social structure. The Vedic theory of Dharma stressed the idea of a transcendant norm and primeval ordinance. Now we find that this concept has received a great amount of social content. But the Upanishadic concept of Dharma did not sanction a mere gospel of socialization. It also contained important criteria of individual enhancement of personality. The Chandogya Upanishad refers to studies, austerities and contemplation as being comprehended under Dharma and this implies that Dharma includes methods and technics of personal inward growth and development. Thus it is evident that the Upanishads extended and deepened the connotation of Dharma by comprehending under it items and categories for the preservation of the organic community and individual self-development. The attribution of allotted functions to the specific orders is an attempt at the incorporation of the principle of social interdependence based on concentration upon one's own Dharma.

Before we proceed further it would be better to recapitulate the basic ideas about Dharma which we have discussed so far. Starting with the Vedic notion of law or ordinance the concept of Dharma assumed two meanings : (1) It became identified with a moral view or an ethic of virtue. This idea was further developed in Buddhism ; (2) it became indentified with the particular social duties of the various castes and orders.[2] In the

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1. Chandogya Upanishad, ii, 23.
2. Taittiriya Upanishad, i, 11.

Upanishads the Dharmas of the four orders are explicitly stated and are implicit so far as Dharmas of the castes are concerned. In the Upanishads both of these meanings are found. Henceforward we shall find that later writers put greater emphasis on the one or on the other aspect of Dharma although the idea that performance of one's duties is a moral task and that moral life is equal to doing one's duties is always present.

3. *THE BUDDHISTIC METAPHYSICS OF DHARMA*

The rise of Buddhism resulted in a further development of the notion of Dharma.[1] The specific idea of duty or Dharma of particular castes and orders was not emphasized in Buddhism. Instead, for the first time, Dharma came to signify a set of doctrines. According to Buddhism, if one wants to become a monk he has to take a vow of threefold submission—submission to Buddha, to the Buddhist ecclesiastical fraternity and to the doctrines. The word Dharma is used for the doctrines. Sometimes the metaphysical and psychological portions of the doctrine are called Dharma as distinguished from the portions that set up codes of discipline.[2] It would give us a clearer picture of the Buddhist view of Dharma if we separate the moral and metaphysical sides of it. We shall first analyze the metaphysics of Dharma.

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[1] According to Geiger, *Dhamma und Brahman*, the word Dharma in the Pali literature is often used as a substitute, in indicating the Buddhist conceptions of the highest life, for the Upanishadic Brahman. The Digha Nikaya, iii, 80 ff., mentions that the Buddha is not only an incorporation of *Dharma* but has become the *Dharman*. Buddhism also accepts the distinction between internal (*ajjhattika*) and external (*bahira*) dharmas, the former term refers to mental presentation, the latter being the external object generating the internal presentation. It is interesting to bear in mind some of the Buddhistic words using dharma, *e.g.* धर्मचक्षु, धर्मविपश्यना, क्षयधर्म, धर्मदृष्टि, आर्यधर्म। Dasgupta, *Indian Philosophy* Vol. I, p. 84 notes that in Buddhist writings the word Dharma is used in several senses; (a) scriptural texts (b) quality (गुण) (c) cause (हेतु) and (d) unsubstantial and soulless (निस्सत्त निज्जीव). In the term धम्म देसना, Dharma means religious teaching. *Ibid.*, p. 427 n.; the use of the word Dharma in the sense of appearance of entity is peculiarly Buddhistic and in this sense it is used by Gaudapada.

A totally different and unique conception of Dharma is found in the Jaina philosophy. There, धर्म = अस्तिकाय and signifies the immanent principle of motion.

[2] Cf. the Dhammasangani. In this book Dharma is also used in the sense of intellectual cognition.

Buddha taught the philosophy of dependent origination. He said: "I will teach you the Dharma. That being thus this comes to be. From the coming to be of that, this arises. That being absent, this does not happen. From the cessation of that this does not happen."[1] This theory of dependent origination or Pratityasamutpada is regarded by Buddha to be the Dharma. This theory leads to the formulation of a philosophy of becoming against both the Upanishadic concept of being and the notion of non-being. In some of the later schools of Mahayana Buddhism the notion of dependent origination led to a philosophy of nihilism and "essencelessness."[2] There was a second metaphysical meaning of Dharma in Buddhism. It is still controversial as to what extent the meaning of Dharma as essence or substance can be found in the Tripitaka literature. But in the school of the Sarvastivadins we do get this meaning of Dharma. This school accepts a pluralism insofar as it believes in seventy-five dharmas or things into which the human mind and the universe can be resolved.[3]

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[1] Cf. Bodhicaryavatarapanjika, ed. by Poussin, p. 474; Tattvasangrahapanjika, pp. 11, 173, (Gaekwad Oriental Series).

[2] यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादः शून्यतां तां प्रचक्ष्महे ।
सा प्रज्ञप्तिरूपादाय प्रतिपत् सैव मध्यमा ॥—Madhyamikakarika xxiv, 18.
प्रतीत्य यद्यद् भवति न हि तावत् तदेव तत् ।
न चान्यदपि तत् तस्मान्नोच्छिन्नं नापि शाश्वतम् ।—*Ibid.*, xxviii, 10

cf. सर्वधर्माणां निःस्वभावता, शून्यता, तथता, भूतकोटिः धर्मधातुरिति पर्यायाः । सर्वस्य हि प्रतीत्यसमुत्पन्नस्य पदार्थस्य निःस्वभावता पारमार्थिकं रूपम्
—Bodhicaryavatara, (Calcutta 1901-1914), p. 353 ff.

[3] Th. Stcherbatsky, *The Central Conception of Buddhism* (London, 1923), pp. 1-6, 95.

References to धर्म in Vasubandhu's Abhidharmakosha :—सास्रवानास्रवा धर्माः ।—i, 4.

धर्मस्कन्धसहस्राण्यशीतिर्यान्यवदन्मुनिः ।
तानि वाग् नाम वा, तेषां रूप-संस्कारसंग्रहः ।
नित्या धर्मा असंस्कृताः ।—i,47.

According to Stcherbatsky, "The Dharmas of the Buddhists and the Gunas of the Samkhya", *Indian Historical Quarterly*, vol. x, 1934, pp. 750-'51, So far as the moral side of Dharma is concerned we find a great discussion of it in early Buddhism.[1] The Buddhist word for morality is Sila.[2] We find mention of the five Silas of a Buddhist : adherence to truth, non-violence, celibacy, non-adultery, non-stealing and non-drinking of strong drink. There are ten Silas for a monk. According to Buddhism, conformity of one's action to the commands of Sila leads to the development of contemplation and finally to the wisdom and insight which lead to the ultimate goal of Nirvana. Thus by making the notion of Sila central for the attainment of Nirvana, Buddha accords a great place to morality in his conception of Dharma.[3] The moral connotation of Dharma is also apparent in the incorporation of the Aryan eight-fold way—the Marga—in the concept of Dharma. In the Buddhist literature we find one sermon of Buddha entitled "Setting in Motion the Wheel of Dharma."[4] In this sermon Buddha exhorts his disciples to avoid the two extremes of indulgence in sensual passions and ascetic self-torture and follow the "middle way" inculcated by him. This "middle way" can be followed by the comprehension of the four Aryan truths : (1) the truth of pain as manifested in physical and mental disease and sufferings, (2) the truth of the the cause of pain, viz. craving for existence and passion leading

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Buddhism degrades the soul ; it is converted into simple consciousness (Vijnāna) which is also a Dharma, an element having the same sense as the other elements.

According to the Lankavatara, धर्म is defined as गुणद्रव्यपूर्वका: धर्मा: । In the Mahayana religion we have the notion of Dharmakaya which connotes a religious conceptualization of the ultimate principle. Contrasted with the realism of Vasubandhu, we find in the Mahayana ontology a phenomenalism which considers all Dharmas as being only momentary.

[1] Rhys Davids, *Buddhism* p. 45 says : "Dharma is not simply law but that which underlies and includes the law, a word often most difficult to translate and best rendered by truth or righteousness."

[2] Sigalovada sutta (Digha Nikaya). शील, समाधि and प्रज्ञा are three basic elements in Buddhism.

[3] According to the Dhammapada, xx, 1,2, :—

मग्गानट्ठङ्गिको सेठ्ठो सच्चानं चतुरो पदा ।
विरागो सेठ्ठो धम्मानं द्विपदानञ्च चक्खुमा ।।
एसो व मग्गो नत्थञ्जो दस्सनस्स विसुद्धिया ।
एतं हि तुम्हे पटिपज्जथ मारस्सेतं पमोहनं ।।

[4] Samyutta Nikaya, v. 420.

to rebirth, (3) the truth of cessation of pain, by suppression of craving, and (4) the truth of the way that leads to the cessation of pain, viz., the eight-fold path consisting of right views, right intentions, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.[1] The Aryan eight-fold path is a comprehensive categorization of the factors of moral existence. Ultimately these factors lead to Samadhi or concentration. This stress on moral living as a part of Dharma incorporated an element of profound self-conscious subjectivity in Hindu thought. During the pre-Vedic and Vedic periods the primary stress was on the worship of external and objective forces and entities. Religion thus had an externalistic orientation. The things of the objective world engaged the attention of pious souls and poets. But with the emergence of the Upanishadic and the Buddhistic thought there was the acute consciousness of the significance of the inner self and the contents of its moral life assumed great importance. The stress on the emancipation from the world and Nirvana is part of this broad intellectual current of philosophic disenchantment. On the social and political plane also this intense ethical, subjective and spiritual awareness had significant consequences. Buddhism released a moral current which also tended to ennoble the patterns of political life.

So far we have analyzed the metaphysical and moral meaning of Dharma in early Buddhism. The Buddhist theory of Dharma had very important political results. By removing the notion of Dharma from the caste vocations and applying it in an ethical sense Buddhism prepared the way for the Asokan theory of kingship which shall be analyzed later. But it is going beyond bounds to see in the Buddhist conception of "wheel of Dharma" the germ of political imperialism. Oursel, Grabowowska and Stern state " . . . the Brahmanic notion of Dharma, which implies the special constitution of each caste and maintains a social order rather than it encourages the appearance of a political spirit, and the Buddhist notion of Dharma, which aims at a law applicable to all mankind and makes for unlimited imperialism. The one conception stands short of monarchy, the other leaps beyond it and aspires to world empire. Chandragupta becomes a king, Asoka an emperor . . . According to Brahmanic orthodoxy the king . . . confines himself to being the preserver of an order essentially pre-established. The Svadharma of each caste which he must both defend and respect, provides the reason for his existing and his limitations. According to the Buddhist theory, it is the king himself who sets the wheel of the Law [Dharma-chakra] moving ; he not only causes the law to reign, he starts it and promotes it."[1] These writers are mistaken in their interpretation of the wheel of Dharma or law. There is no documentary evidence for the statement that the king sets the wheel of Law. The wheel of Dharma is set moving not by a king but by a prophet and religious leader.[2] The difficulty in which these writers have landed themselves is due to their non-recognition of the true nature of Dharma. Dharma, as we pointed out, had in the Upanishads and the later literature the double connotation—(1) identity with truth, and (2) specific caste duties. Buddha in his idea of the wheel of Dharma was not initiating the movement for a political imperialism but was actually emphasizing the moral connotation of the word. It is, of course, true that he gave it an almost absolutistic tinge, ethically speaking, which is not found in the older tradition.[3]

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[1] दुःख, दुःखसमुदय, दुखनिरोध and दुःख निरोधगामिनी प्रतिपद् (सम्यग्दृष्टि, सम्यक् संकल्प, सम्यक् वाचा, सम्यक् कर्मान्त, सम्यग् आजीविका, सम्यक् व्यायाम, सम्यक् स्मृति, सम्यक् समाधि).

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[1] Paul Masson-Oursel and others, *op. cit.*, pp. 93-94.

According to Ramaprasad Chand, No. 30 of the *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India*, "Asoka's Dharmavijaya...is not a missionary movement, but a definite imperial policy". D. R. Bhandarkar, *Asoka* p. 237, on the other hand, asserts that Dharmavijaya indicated a missionary movement aiming at the moral and spiritual good of the world ; cp. the Chakkavattisihanāda sutta of the Digha Nikaya : "Conquest not by the scourge, not by the sword, but by righteousness," *Dialogues of the Buddha*, iii, p. 59.

[2] Cf. Buddha says : "A king am I, Sela, the king supreme of righteousness. The royal chariot-wheel in righteousness do I set rolling on—that wheel that no one can turn back again". (Sela Sutta in Sutta Nipata, iii, 7, 7).

[3] Cp. Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and its Development*, "In the Buddha the ethical is so strongly developed that it is already an end in itself. He does not admit this, but leaves ethics still in the service of the redemption dominated by world and life negation", p. 110. "He (Buddha) gave to India something

The movement of imperialism, instead of being furthered, was actually retarded by the Buddhist doctrine of non-violence. I feel that these writers have confused the notion of the wheel of Dharma with the idea of "the king who was a wheel" or the king whose wheel has an unobstructed march. The latter notion is older than Budddhism. Buddha borrowed the idea of a wheel, used hitherto in a political sense and used the term Dharma-Chakra in a religious context.

4. *KAUTILYA'S PHILOSOPHY OF DHARMA*

In the Arthasastra of Kautilya the word Dharma is used in various senses and it is essential to comprehend them to understand his political thought. At least three meanings of Dharma in Kautilya can be distinguished :—(1) Dharma in the sense of social duty, (2) Dharma as moral law based on truth, and (3) Dharma as civil law.

According to Kautilya, an accomplished king must be devoted to Dharma.[1] He is called the "promulgator of Dharma". Even if mendicants and ascetics engage in improper proceedings the king is to restrain them under threat of punishment because if Dharma is transgressed then it redounds to the evil of the ruler (धर्मो ह्यधर्मोपहतः शास्तारं हन्त्युपेक्षितः). In all kinds of fines below a hundred panas, the king shall charge in addition to the fine eight per cent more as Rupa and in fines above hundred five per cent more as Vyaji. According to Kautilya these two kinds of exactions are in accordance with Dharma (रूपव्याज्यावधर्मिष्ठे धर्म्यानुप्रकृतिः स्मृताः) because of the proneness of the subject to committing faults and the possible misguided sentimentality of kings. The righteous performance of his duties ensures heaven for the king.[2] In the first book of the Arthasastra Kautilya

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it did not yet possess, an ethic derived from thought. Up to then it only knew a traditional morality of virtues and duties, and such an ethic as that is only capable of development up to a certain point. The ultimate higher evolution of ethics only starts when thought begins to be occupied with morals and to seek the fundamental principle which comprehends all virtues and all duties. When the Buddha exalted compassionate love to be the fundamental principle of morality, he breathed into Indian ethics a knew breath of life".

[1] Arthasastra, vi, 1.
[2] *Ibid*, iii, 1.

describes a "sage king" and he is emphatic in his assertion that a king must have restraint over six passions, sex, anger, greed, vanity, haughtiness and overjoy.[1] In making this list Kautilya is accepting the traditional view. Perhaps the idea of the sixth passion is his addition. In the Hindu literature we get four and sometimes five or six elements in the categorization of passions which have to be restrained. Usually Hindu writers talk of these passions when they discuss the requirements of a person who wants to pursue the study of the absolute. The writers on the Dharma of the king do refer to them, but Kautilya is the first to create a moral philosophy of kingship out of them.[2] He refers to the ancient history of India and puts forward the names of several kings, who perished because they indulged in these passions.[3] One or more king is represented to illustrate the extreme of one passion. Thus one king perished because of lust, another because of anger, a third because of greed, the fourth due to vanity, the fifth because of haughtiness and the sixth as a consequence of overjoy. This moral philosophy of kingship constitutes a great contribution in the field of political thought. In European political thought we find that Plato, Aristotle, Cicero and Kant stress the significance of moral factors in politics. Plato has stated that the highest guardians or the philosopher-rulers should be wise, courageous and temperate. But if we make a comparative estimate of Hindu and western political thought we find that the stress on moral factors is far more pronouced in Hindu culture. It is significant that Kautilya, who is regarded as a theorist of political power and conquest, should be so much concerned with the control of unregenerate passions. This dominant concern with moral values is an effect of the heightened and exalted character of spiritual truths in Hindu thought. Kautilya's moral philosophy of kingship has thus two foundations. First, it is substantiated on pragmatic and historical foundations because illustrations have been cited to indicate the dire consequences of the transgression of the ethical creeds. If a king does not adhere to the moral code, then according to Kautilya he is bound to suffer a collapse. Secondly it can be said that Kautilya is affirming his acceptance of the preponderant moral-spiritual *Weltanschauung* (world-view) of Hindu culture, because he believes in the supremacy of the ethical code.

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[1] *Ibid.*, i, 6.

[2] Arthasastra, i, 6.

एवं चान्ये च बहवः शत्रुषड्वर्गमाश्रिताः ।
सबन्धुराष्ट्रा राजानो विनेशुरजितेन्द्रियाः ।।
शत्रुषड्वर्गमुत्सृज्य जामदग्न्यो जितेन्द्रियः ।
अम्बरीषश्च नाभागो बुभुजाते चिरं महीम् ।।

[3] The theory of the moral foundations of political power is one of the most significant contributions of Hindu political thought. Kautilya attempts to substantiate his views historically. Bhoja Dandakya perished because he was overpowered by lust. Karāl Vaideha perished because of the baneful effects of anger. Janamejaya and Talajangha are also examples of extinction brought about by anger. Aila and Ajabindu perished because they were prone to extreme acquisitiveness. Ravana and Duryodhana and Dambhodbhava met their end because in their perverted sense of vanity they transgressed the canons of justice. Vatapi perished because under the influence of extreme addiction to pleasure (हर्षात्) he attacked Agastya. Arjuna of Haihaya dynasty met his end because he had contempt for all people (भूतावमानी) while the republican Samgha of the Vrishnis perished because of the attempt against Dvaipayana.

Kautilya has a theory of the vow or duty[1] of the king. He says that the king should divide the day and the night into eight Nalikas (1½ hours)—eight for the day and eight for the night and gives a list of the duties which the king is to perform in them.[2]

The day is to be spent by the king as follows : during the first one-eighth part of the day he shall post watchmen and attend to the accounts of receipts and expenditures ; during the second part he is to look into the affairs of the people of the town and the country ; during the third part he is to bathe and dine and study the scriptures ; during the fourth he is to receive revenue in gold and look into the affairs of the departmental superintendents; during the fifth he is to communicate with the council of ministers through letters, and to receive the secret information gathered by the spies ; during the sixth he is either to relax or to contemplate policy or to practise self-meditation; during the seventh he shall superintend elephants, horses,chariots, and infantry, and during the eighth part he is to discuss defense and military operations with his commander-in-chief. At the end of the day he is to engage in the evening worship and prayer. During the first one-eighth part of the night he shall receive secret emissaries ; during the second he shall bathe and eat and study the scriptures[1] ; during the third he shall enter the bed-chamber amid the sound of trumpets and enjoy sleep during the fourth and fifth parts ; having been awakened by the sound of trumpets during the sixth part, he shall reflect upon the authoritative books as well as upon his policy and course of action ; during the seventh he shall deliberate upon administrative policy and dispatch spies, and during the eighth division of the night he shall receive blessings from sacrificial priests, Vedic teachers and the royal priest and having met and talked with his physician, chief cook and the astrologer, and having gone round a cow with its calf and a bull, he shall get into the royal court. These duties are comprised under the head of the Dharma and Vrata or the vow of the king. He could change the schedule according to his personal capacities and the objective demands of the situation.

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[1] Arthasastra i, 19 राज्ञो हि व्रतमुत्थानं यज्ञकार्यानुशासनम् दक्षिणा वृतिसाम्यं च दीक्षितस्याभिषेचनम् ।

Cf. this Arthasastra verse with the following Vedic mantra ;

व्रतेन दीक्षामाप्नोति दीक्षयाप्नोति दक्षिणाम् ।
दक्षिणा श्रद्धामाप्नोति श्रद्धया सत्यमाप्यते ॥—(V.S. XIX, 30)

[2] Arthasastra, i, 13, pp. 39-41.

This schedule was based on a theory of kingship in which energetic and efficient action was emphasized.[2] The king, according to Kautilya, should be ever active. If he becomes inaccesible to the people and gets the work done by subordinate officers then he is sure to engender confusion in political business which produces public discontent culminating possibly in the capture of the king by his enemies (तेन प्रकृतिकोपमरिवशं वा गच्छेत्). Hence the king was exhorted to attend personally, to the business of gods, of heretics, of Brahmins learned in the

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[1] In a philosophical study of the political thought and ideals of Kautilya we have to stress his insistence on स्वाध्याय, संध्योपासन and शास्त्रचिंतन.

[2] Arthasastra, i, 19.

Vedic scriptures, of cattle, of places of pilgrimage, of minors, the old, the afflicted and the forlorn and of women—all this in in order (of enumeration) or according to the urgency or pressure of work (कार्यगौरवादात्ययिकवशेन वा). The king must respond to duties requiring his urgent attention because if he would procrastinate then they will prove too difficult and may be even impossible to realize. Kautilya substantiates this notion of strenuous activity on realistic grounds. He is a champion of the concept of progress rooted in action (उत्थान). If the concept of Dharma, at least partly, represents the philosophical side of Kautilya's thought, the concept of progressive action (उत्थान) would indicate his realistic approach. Kautilya says : "Of a king, the sacred duty or vow is his readiness to action, satisfactory discharge of his duties in his performance of sacrifice, equal attention to all. In the happiness (of the people) of his subjects lies his happiness ; in their welfare his welfare ; whatever pleases himself he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good. Hence the king shall ever be active and perform his functions ; the root of wealth is activity and of evil, its reverse.[1] The performance of kingly functions is thus based on the desire to serve the common good and well-being of the people and if the king did his duties well he would not only gain worldly prosperity but attain heaven. This idea is remarkably similar to the view of Kanada according to whom Dharma is that which serves the well-being of a person both in this world and the next.[2] Since according to Kautilya the performance of one's duties leads to both mundane and transcendental happiness , it is the duty of the king never to allow people to swerve from their duties.[3] Thus the fundamental purpose of the political organization is the maintenance of Svadharma. The king should adhere to his own Dharma and should be careful to see

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1. Arthasastra, i, 19, p. 41.
2. यतोऽभ्युदयनिःश्रेयससिद्धिः स धर्मः ।—Vaisesikasutra, i, 2.

धर्मविशेषप्रसूताद् द्रव्यगुणकर्मसामान्यविशेषसमवायानां पदार्थानां साधर्म्य-वैधर्म्याभ्यां तत्वज्ञानान्निःश्रेयसम् ।—*Ibid* : i, 1. 4.

3. Arthasastra, 1. 3.

that other orders and Varnas also are faithful to their Dharma. Hence the concept of Svadharma comes to occupy the central place in the scheme of the values and ideas that were to govern the political organisation. In spite of tremendous pre-occupation with the details of economic and political structures, when it comes to the choice of the fundamental goal which is to permeate the people and the king, Kautilya does not choose mere protection or economic security. It would be incorrect to characterize that the Kautilyan state was in its ends and functions an economic state. If we were to interpret Kautilya in modern terms we may say that he is not an utilitarian absorbed in political protection or a state socialist preaching social service but is, in the tradition of the writers of ancient Hindu political thought, an adherent of Rajadharma or Svadharma—a culture-state.

Some further ideas about Dharma are found in the chapter where Kautilya deals with law. These ideas could be grouped under Dharma as moral law. According to Kautilya there are four sources for settling a legal controversy : (1) Dharma, (2) Vyavahara or evidence, (3) Caritra or history and conduct of reputed persons, and (4) royal edicts.[1] He says that if there be disagreement between institutional law and practice and the authoritative texts on Dharma, or if there be conflict between the texts and evidence, then the matter has to be settled in accordance with Dharma. Kautilya states that Dharma is rooted in truth.[2] If the texts, and by these perhaps he implies the

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1. अनुशासद्धि धर्मेण व्यवहारेण संस्थया ।
न्यायेन च चतुर्थेन चतुरन्तां महीं जयेत् ॥
संस्थया धर्मशास्त्रेण शास्त्रं वा व्यावहरिकम् ।
यस्मिन्नर्थे विरुध्येत धर्मेणार्थं विनिर्णयेत् ॥
शास्त्रं विप्रतिपद्येत धर्मन्यायेन केनचित् ।
न्यायस्तत्र प्रमाणं स्यात् तत्र पाठो हि नश्यति ॥—Arthasastra, iii, 1.

2. धर्मश्च व्यवहारश्च चरित्रं राजशासनम् ।
विवादार्थश्चतुष्पादः पश्चिमः पूर्वबाधकः ॥
तत्र सत्ये स्थितो धर्मो व्यवहारस्तु साक्षिषु ।
चरित्रं संग्रहे पुंसां राज्ञामाज्ञा तु शासनम् ॥—Arthasastra iii. 1.

Contrast Narada:—
धर्मशास्त्रविरोधे तु युक्तियुक्तो विधि : स्मृतः ।
व्यवहारो हि बलवान् धर्मस्तेनावहीयते ॥

texts on civil law, criminal law and social conduct which go by the name of Dharmasastras, conflict with evidence or history, then the moral principle of truth has to be accepted as being decisive. If the texts of the Dharmasastras conflict with the canons of justice rooted in truth, then the latter should have precedence because the original Vedic texts on which the Dharmasastras are based, or the original texts of the Dharmasastras themselves are not available.[1] In this context Kautilya is familiar with the meaning of Dharma which was given currency by the writers of the Dharmasutras and the Dharmasastras. According to the latter, Dharma comprehends civil and criminal law and social conduct. Thus we find that Kautilya stands for truth and justice over against evidence, the texts of the Dharmasastras and institutional history and practices. So far as the elucidation of the concept of Dharma is concerned, he has accepted the view of the Brahmanas and the Upanishads that Dharma is rooted in truth.

Kautilya also uses the term Dharma in the sense of law and more specifically civil law.[2] In this sense he does not

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[1] Cf. N. C. Bondyopadhyaya, *Kautilya* (Calcutta, 1927), p. 223: "Next to being impartial the king was to use discretion and reason. In adjudicating, he was to consider धर्म, व्यवहार and संस्था, but in interpreting the law, he was bound to follow the dictates of reason and equity (or न्याय). In cases where custom was in disagreement with the text of the Dharmasastras or where the Sastric rule was at variance with practice, he was to uphold the righteous custom by using his reason. Furthermore, in interpreting the Sastras, the king was to be guided more by the dictates of reason and equity (धर्मन्याय). In such cases of disputed interpretation, the dictates of righteous conscience alone were to be highest text of the Sruti and the written injunction must be regarded as lost".

[2] According to Sukra also one of the implications of Dharma is law. He prescribes that the Pandita, should suggest changes in Dharma. He says:

वर्तमानाश्च प्राचीनाः धर्माः के लोकसंश्रिताः ।
शास्त्रेषु के समुद्दिष्टा विरुध्यंते च केऽधुना ॥
लोकशास्त्रविरुद्धाः के पंडितस्तान्विचिन्त्य च ।
नृपं संबोधयेत्तैश्च परत्रेहसुखप्रदैः ॥ (Sukraniti, ii, 99-100).

Thus we find it stated that the Pandita has to study and examine the rules of Dharma existent both in ancient days and in the contemporaneous society, which have been mentioned in the codes, which are now opposed, and which militate against the customs of the folk and to advise the king with those which are fruitful both for this life and beyond. Sukra is an advocate not of immutable use the word Dharma alone but uses "rooted in Dharma".[1] The name for judges in Kautilya is "rooted in Dharma". The third book of the Arthasastra deals with civil law. A short sketch of the subjects dealt with in this book will clarify this third meaning of Dharma as civil law. The third book of the Arthasastra . is called "Concerning Dharma" (धर्मस्थीयम्). It deals with the determination of forms of agreements, the determination of legal disputes, marriage, division of inheritance, buildings, non-performance of agreements, recovery of debts, deposits, rules regarding slaves and labourers, co-operative undertakings, rescission of purchases and sales, resumption of gifts and sale without ownership, ownership, robbery, defamation, assault, gambling and betting and other miscellaneous topics. The topics dealt with here are similar to those in the Dharmasutras and Dharmasastras and the Smritis. Hence it is clear that the meaning of Dharma as civil law is borrowed by Kautilya from the previous writers of Dharmasutras.

5. *THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF ASOKA*

After Kautilya's Arthasastra, we pass on chronologically to the inscriptions of Asoka.[2] Asoka's inscriptions, inscribed on pillars and rocks, are extremely important for providing the concrete details of contemporary social and administrative life. But no attempt has yet been made to study the inscriptions from the standpoint of political theory. In 1944 I wrote a paper analyzing the philosophical foundations of his theory of kingship.[3] The Asokan

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and eternal norms but is a sociological realist and can visualise the necessity and possibility of legal change. The institution of the Pandita bears some similarity to the Nocturnal council discussed by Plato in the *Laws*. What is of significance in the present context is the use of the word Dharma to mean law.

[1] Arthasastra iii, 1. धर्मस्थास्त्रयस्त्रयोऽमात्या जनपदसंधिसंग्रहद्रोणमुखस्थानीयेषु व्यावहारिकानर्थान्कुर्युः ।

[2] Radhakumud Mookerji, *Asoka* (London, 1928). All quotations from the English translations of the inscriptions of Asoka have been taken from this book. The page number cited after the reference to the inscriptions will refer to this book.

[3] The paper was read at the Archaeological and Historical Society, Patna College, India in April 1944.

inscriptions are written in the Pali language—a language which was the vernacular in the time of Buddha. They are called "Dhammalipi" or edicts of Dharma.[1] The interpretation of Dharma has led to great controversies. Some people translate it as piety, indicating the inspiration of the edicts by the Buddhist insistence on piety. Some translate it as morality, others render it by law. Those who equate Dharma with law think that the Asokan inscriptions must be interpreted in the light of the notion of Dharma as law popularized by the Dharmasutras and the Dharmasastras. These scholars try hard to minimize the vast intellectual and philosophical legacy which Buddhism left for Asoka. They think that since the edicts deal also with administration and justice it would be futile to translate Dharma by any other word but law. But we should not go too far in our effort to interpret Asoka as a modern neo-Kantian philosophical idealist.[2] If the existence of administrative and judicial facts in some of the edicts confirms their political character, it does not negate the existence of moral sermons in other parts. More than once in our analysis we have found that Dharma comprehends the notion of duties including the duties of a king and at the same time has a moral connotation. We shall show later on that the sharp separation between political and moral is alien to Hindu thinkers. Our studies of Asokan inscriptions convince us that it is utterly incorrect to minimize

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[1] For the sake of convenience the Sanskrit form Dharma has been used instead of the Pali form Dhamma ; Buhler translates Dhammalipi with 'religious edict', Kern proposed 'righteous-edict'.

[2] V. R. R. Dikshitara, *The Mauryan Polity*, p. 92 says : "Asoka has nowhere claimed that he made any departure in the legislation of the land. He simply enforced the regulations which had fallen into disuse by long and continual neglect. If Asoka did anything he revived old practices and put them in working order. The idea that the Hindu king is a law-maker is not contenanced in Indian jurisprudence at all. To regard therefore the Ṣasana (शासन) contained in the edicts of Asoka as amounting to legislation by the king is to say the least, uncritical. What Asoka did was the re-affirmation of old laws which had gone out of practice. Therefore the term Sasana occuring in the Sarnath Pillar Edict and continued in the Pillar Edict of Sanchi and Kausambi does not mean promulgation of a new law, but does mean a declaration of the old law without prejudice to the customary law." The separation between inward spontaneous morality and externally-oriented law is not to be found in Asoka.

Buddhist influence on Asokan theories and practices.[1] We do not deny that the tradition of Hindu political writers on Dandaniti and Arthasastra influenced him. Asoka meddled in the affairs of the Buddhist church,[2] indicated his own selections and preferences so far as the Buddhist sacred literature was concerned,[3] but still it is true that the word Dharma in the edicts does not stand for Buddhist philosophical doctrines. As we see it, the word Dharma connotes, in the edicts, a generalized notion of moral conduct in one's social and political relations as well as purity of intentions and devotion to meditation. This basic notion, we emphatically assert, has been derived from those portions of the Buddhist literature which deal with morals. We can find occasional statements in the Upanishads and the Dharmasutras about the above-mentioned notion of Dharma but the fundamental importance of this notion is found only in Buddhism and in the later literature inspired by Buddhism.[4] We shall now analyze the notion of Dharma as Asoka himself expounds it.

According to Asoka, both this world and the next are difficult of attainment without extreme love of Dharma, utmost self-introspection, utmost obedience, utmost dread (of sin) and utmost enthusiasm.[5] The noble deeds of Dharma are those through which compassion, liberality, truthfulness, purity, gentleness and goodness of the people will increase.[1] He defines the content of Dharma in various inscriptions and this includes freedom from self-indulgence, abundance of good deeds, kindness, liberality, truthfulness, purity, growth of the essential elements of all religious sects, proper treatment of slaves and servants, obedience to mother and father, charity to friends, companions, relations, Brahmans and Sramana ascetics and abstention from slaughter of living creatures for sacrifice.[2] Hence the Asokan notion of Dharma includdes noble and pure intentions, proper maintenance of social relationships and abstention from animal slaughter.[3] Thus it is evident that the moral code according to Asoka is a broad one. He is not content with the moralization of only the external and social aspects of human conduct. He adheres to the Buddhist view that the purity of will (Samkalpa) is very significant. It is true that true moral effects are based upon disinterested spontaneity but Asoka believes that constant exhortations could reinforce the moral orientations of people.

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[1] The views of H. Heras have been controverted by F. W. Thomas and Buhler. Prof. Kern remarks : "Nothing of Buddhist spirit can be discovered in his state policy. From the very beginning of his reign he was a good prince". Dikshitara, *Mauryan Polity* p. 288, concludes that Asoka was not a Buddhist and his personal faith was Brahminical Hinduism to the very end of his days. But the arguments adduced by him are fallacious.

[2] In the Sanchi Pillar Edict Asoka says : "My desire is that the Samgha may be united and of long duration." In the Sarnath Pillar Edict it is said : "That monk or men who shall break up the Samgha shall be made to put on white garments and to reside in a non-residence." Asoka's intervention in the Buddhist Samgha is a partial half-theocratic attempt by temporal rulers to control the religious fraternity.

[3] According to the Calcutta Bairat Edict, the following seven literary expositions were lauded by Asoka for repeated study by monks and men :—

(i) the Vinaya Samukasa, (ii) The Aliyavasas, (iii) Anagata-bhayas, (iv) Munigatha, (v) Mauneyasuta, (vi) Upatisa-pasina, and the (vii) Laghulovada.

[4] Reference to "the middle path" in Kalinga Rock Edict. There seems to be a very definite influence of the Dhammapada on Asoka.

[5] Pillar Edict, 1.

Asoka's theory of kingship was inspired by his broad and comprehensive notion of Dharma. Three basic ideas are central in his view of kingship : (1) the theory of kingly exertion and efforts ; (2) the theory of the well-being of all ; and (3) the paternalistic theory conceiving of people as children of the king, the father. Asoka accepts that the realization of collective happiness and well-being is difficult without sustained efforts. He says : "My highest duty is, indeed, the promotion of the good of all. Of that again the root is this : exertion and business. There is no higher work than the promotion of the common weal. And if I am at all making any exertion, it is in order that I may obtain the discharge of debt to all living beings, and make them happy in this world, while they may attain heaven in the world beyond....But this is difficult of achievement except by great and sustained effort".[1] In this passage great emphasis has been put on efforts. Asoka does not even mention the life of meditation and insight which is the ideal of the Buddhist monk who has relieved himself of all social and political obligations. His ideal is similar to the "strenuously working sage king" of Kautilya's philosophy. According to Asoka there are certain dispositions which are impediments to the effective pursuance of political life and these are envy, lack of sustained efforts, harshness, haste, want of application, indolence and lassitude.[2] Hence, steadiness and patience have to be resorted to. He who is indolent in the execution of administrative functions will not rise up, and hence one has to move, advance and proceed forth. Those who fail in their duties will attain neither royal favour nor heaven. Hence he wanted even the forest tribes to be up on the march and pursue the path of Dharma.

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[1] *Ibid.*, vii.

[2] *Ibid.*, vii. Rock Edict, xii, Rock Edict, xi, Rock Edict, ix.

[3] Rock Edict iv. The concepts antithetical to Dharma are Asinava, Papa, Parisrava—Pillar Edicts ii and iii.

This emphasis on works and incessant exertion points out their significance for the realization of the good of all beings.[3] Only exertion can lead to the good of all. Here is found the implicit notion that royal authority can be justified only if it helps in the attainment of the good of the people. Asoka talks of his debt to his fellow human beings.[4] This notion of "debt" is hightly significant. In the Hindu tradition every person is born with three debts and he has to repay them.[5] He owes a debt to the gods which can be made good by sacrifices. He has a debt to the fathers or ancestors and he can repay that by perpetuating the race. The third debt is to the sage which can be made good by devotion to studies. In pursuance of his notion of the well-being of all beings Asoka evolved the idea of a debt to fellow human beings owed by the king. This notion of the debt of the king to the people has a great resemblance to the theory of royal power as a trust which is found in the Mahabharata. Asoka was quite serious about the idea of debt because he spoke not only of his debt to the people but also of the debt of the administrative officials to the king.[1]

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[1] Rock Edict vi ; Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, i, 273, says with reference to the Asokan theory of work and exertion : " 'work I must for the public benefit—and the root of the matter is in exertion and despatch of business than which nothing is more efficacious for the general welfare.' These sound like the words of a British Utilitarian rather than of a dreamy oriental emperor. He is far from pessimistic."

[2] Kalinga Edict i. The Divyavadana styles Asoka as *Chaturbhāga-Chakravarti Dharmiko Dharmarajo.*

[3] Rock Edict. vi.

[4] Rock Edict vi.

[5] त्रिभिःऋणवा जायते; T. S ; vi, 3, 10.

Asoka upholds a paternalistic view of royal power.[2] He says : "All men are my children, and just as I desire for my children that they enjoy every kind of prosperity and happiness in both this world and the next, so also I believe the same for all men."[3] He wants the people living on the borders of his kingdom to feel that he is interested in their solicitude in the same way as a father is interested in the welfare of his children.[4] Kautilya also accepts the view that the king should consider his good to reside in the good of the people. The Hindu word for subjects or people is Praja and it means both subjects and children. If philology is to be relied upon, the paternalistic notion thus is implicit in the very Sanskrit word for subjects. No trace of the paternalistic theory is found in the Vedic literature.[5] Contemporaneous with the Upanishadic literature there is reference to a kingly dynasty in eastern India whose kings bore the last name of Janaka, meaning father. Possibly that could be an example of a paternalistic polity. Kautilya very definitely is an advocate of the paternalistic theory of kingship.[1] Integrally related to this paternalistic idea is the Asokan notion of entrusting his subjects into the hands of the administrative officers "as a mother leaves her child in the hands of a known nurse."[2]

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[1] Kalinga Edict i.

[2] Cf. तान् पितेवानुगृह्णीयात्—Arthasastra, ii, 1.

[3] Kalinga Edict ii ; Mookerji, *Asoka, op. cit.*, pp. 48-49, is wrong in interpreting ancient Hindu kingship to be more representententative than the legisture in a modern democracy. It is an incorrect use of the word "representative". It may be possible that a few Indian monarchs like Asoka were enlightened enough to stress the conservation of the interests of the people. But conservation of interests is different from the representation of will and desires which is the most significant item in a representative democractic system.

[4] Kalinga Edict ii, D. R. Bhandarkar, *Asoka* p. 63, says : "Just as children are solely dependent upon their parents who can do to them just what they like, the subjects were at the mercy of the kings who was thus no better than a despot". Bhandarkar's statements may sound psychologically unrealistic but are not absolutely false. It is possible to practice despotism under the garb of paternalism. It is a fact that some fathers have been despots. But Asoka was a sincere king and had a genuine love for the people and a true concern for their good (हितसुख).

[5] Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 300, holds a different view.

Besides profoundly influencing the theory of royal power, the concept of Dharma resulted in the formulation by Asoka of a very comprehensive idea of toleration.[3] He says: "His Sacred Majesty does not value such gifts or honors as that, how should there be the growth of the essential elements of all religious sects. The growth of this genuine matter is, however, of many kinds. But the root of it is restraint of speech, that is, that there should not be honor of one's own sect and condemnation of others" sects without any ground. Such slighting should be for specified grounds only. On the other hand, the sects of others should be honored for this ground and that. Thus doing, one helps his own sect to grow, and benefits the sect of others too. Doing otherwise, one hurts his own sect and injures the sects of others. For whosoever honours his own sect and condemns the sects of others wholly from devotion to his own sect, i.e., the thought "how may I glorify my own sect"—one acting thus injures more gravely

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1. Arthasastra, ii, 1 ; also, Manusmriti, vii, 80. Cf. Maunusmriti, vii, 135:

श्रुतवृत्ते विदित्वास्य वृत्तिं धर्म्यां प्रकल्पयेत् ।
संरक्षेत्सर्वतश्चैनं पिता पुत्रमिवौरसम् ॥

2. Pillar Edict iv, Cf. :

यथा हि गर्भिणी हित्वा स्वप्रियं मनसोऽनुगम् ।
गर्भस्य हितमाधत्ते तथा कुर्यात्प्रजाहितम् ॥

—Vaisampayana's Nitiprakasika, viii, 2.

3. Lord Action, *Essays on Freedom and Power* (Boston, 1948), p. 54,. Cf. E.J. Rapson, *Ancient India* (Cambridge, 1916) pp.111-112.; "The grouping of village communities into states, and the grouping of states into empires has left the social system (in India) unchanged. All governments have been obliged to recognize an infinite variety among the governed of social customs and religious beliefs too firmly grounded to admit of interference. Thus the idea of religious toleration which was of slow growth in Europe was accepted in India generally from the earliest times. All religious communities were alike under the protection of the sovereign ; and inscriptions plainly show that when the government changed hands, the privileges granted to religious communities were ratified by the new sovereign as a matter of course. In a special edict devoted to the subject of religious toleration, Asoka definitely says that his own practice was to reverence all sects."

his own sect on the contrary. Hence, concord alone is commendable, in this sense that all should listen and be willing to listen to the doctrine professed by others . . . all sects should be possessed of wide learning and good doctrines . . . And the fruit of this is that the promotion of one's own sect takes place as well as the glorification of Dharma.'[1] The notion of Dharma thus results in the formulation of a policy of wide mutual understanding among the various sects.[2] It is interesting to note that according to Asoka one who disparages the sects and doctrines of others harms his own sect.

It is possible to get a clear realization of the Asokan concept of Dharma if besides analyzing its theoretical character we very briefly look into the administrative measures of Asoka. Most important of all was the appointment of "Dharma-officers" or Ministers of Dharma. These officers were employed among all sects for the establishment and growth of Dharma and for the good and happiness of those devoted to Dharma. They were also employed among the soldiers and their chiefs, Brahmanical ascetics and householders, the destitute and the infirm by age, for the good and happiness and freedom from molestation of those who have applied themselves to Dharma. They were also employed for taking steps against imprisonment, for freedom from movlestation, and granting release, on the ground that one had numerous offspring or was overwhelmed by misfortune or was afflicted by age.[3] The Dharma-officers were "employed among those devoted to Dharma in all places within the dominions"-of Asoka. He also inscribed on rocks and pillars what he calls the rescripts of Dharma. He instituted the practice of "tours of Dharma" wherein visits would be made by the royal officers to the people of the country and discussions about Dharma would take place. These "tours of Dharma" also included "visits and gifts to the Brahmins and the Sramanas as well as visits and gifts of gold to the elders".[1] In place of the traditional ceremonies he instituted ceremonies connected with Dharma and these comprehended proper treatment of slaves and employees, reverence to teachers, restraint of violence towards living creatures and liberality to Brahmins and Sramana ascetics.[2] Speaking of the consequence of these ceremonies he says: "But this ceremonial is not of time. Even if one does not achieve that object in this world, in the world beyond is produced endless merit." This conception of noble deeds producing good in after-life is vitally connected with the Hindu philosophy of Karma.

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[1] Rock Edict xii ; also Rock Edicts vii and xiii.

[2] Confining their attention to the history of the Western nations, European and American sociologists and philosophers of history consider the concept of toleration to be a product of the post-Reformation period. Cf. Marx and Engels : *The Communist Manifesto*, "The ideas of religious liberty and freedom of conscience, merely gave expression to the sway of free competition, within the domain of knowledge." Throughout the whole history of India when she was ruled by potentates conforming to indigenous creeds, we find a broad spirit of mutual acceptance. This situation was a product of two factors. First, the comprehensive metaphysical systems which could reconcile apparently divergent philosophical propositions. One example of this type of metaphysics would be the "Syadvada" of the Jainas. Second, the absence of an established church which could support the political regime for the privilege of monopolistically obtaining the favours of the state. The diffusedness and the non-organised character of the ancient Indian religions made them more "tolerant".

[3] *Ibid.*, Rock Edict v.

So far the specific implications of Dharma for political philosophy—the theories of royal exertion, paternalism, and toleration—have been analyzed. Now we shall discuss its most important implication—the theory of the renunciation of violence and warfare. Asoka was engaged in a bloody battle in eastern India. The ghastly scene of death and carnage produced a revolution in his mind and under the influence of Buddhism he renounced all future warfare.[3] Asoka refers to the conquest by Dharma.

[1] *Ibid.*, vii, Rock Edict viii.

[2] Rock Edict ix. J. F. Fleet, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1908, pp. 491-92, held that the Dharma referred to in the Rock and Pillar Edicts is not connected with Buddhism because they contain no mention of Buddha and only a solitary casual reference to the Sangha. He equated Asoka's Dharma with the Rajadharma of the Manusmriti. But we should not under-estimate the importance of the Second Bairat Edict.

[3] Cf., Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, i, 273 : "Asoka has been compared with Constantine but it has been justly observed that the comparison is superficial, for Constantine (more like Kanishka than Asoka) merely recognised and regulated a religion which has already won its way in his empire. He has also been compared with St. Paul and in so far as both men transformed a provincial sect into a religion for all mankind the parallel is just, but it ends there... In the gallery of pious Emperors, he (Asoka) stands isolated as perhaps the one man whose only passion was for a sane, kindly and humane life, neither too curious of great mysteries nor preoccupied with his own soul but simply the friend of man and beast." R. C. Dutt, *Civilization in the Buddhist Age* (Calcutta, 1908), p. 88 : "No monarch of India, not even Vikramaditya, has such a world-wide reputation, and none has exerted such influence on the history of the world by his zeal for righteousness and virute."

He says : "in consequence of the practice of Dharma...the sound of war drums has become the call to Dharma." He is quite eloquent in his praise of this replacement of violence and warfare by Dharma. And what is conquest by Dharma is considered by his Sacred Majesty the principal conquest . . . The conquest that by this [Dharma] is won everywhere, that conquest again, everywhere, is productive of a feeling of love. Love is won in conquests by Dharma. That love may be indeed, slight, but his Sacred Majesty considers it productive of great fruit, indeed, in the world beyond. For this purpose has this edict of Dharma been indited that my sons and great-grandsons that may be, should not think that a new conquest ought to be made ; but that if a conquest is theirs (or pleases them), they should relish forbearance and mildness of punishment and that they should consider that only as conquest which is conquest by Dharma. This is both of this world and the next.[1] The ground that Asoka advances for this conquest by Dharma are that it results in the fostering of love and that it is conducive to the welfare both of this world and the next. The appeal to transcendental good is one of the dominant themes in Asokan inscriptions. He supports his view of "Dharma-conquest" by appealing to the great harm and suffering both to the combating population and the non-combatants like children, women, Brahmins and ascetics, which result from a violent armed conflict.[2]

The question of "conquest by Dharma" brings forth the entire question of political ethics, especially of violence which as Max Weber emphasizes is the decisive means for politics.[3] The theme of the dichotomous juxtaposition of Dharma and political violence was new in Hindu political philosophy at the time of Asoka. During the Vedic days gods were invoked to give victory in battle.[1] The notion of non-violence originated in the Upanishads and there was a condemnation by the teachers of the Upanishads of the sacrifices which involved violence.[2] But no question of political violence was raised. Buddhism formulated a comprehensive philosophy of non-violence but there was no condemnation of political warfare by Buddha. Non-violence according to Buddhism was a principal virtue for the individual. It is true that Buddha preached the idea of non-hatred but this too was analyzed mainly in the context of the conduct of an aspirant after cessation of worldly pain. Both Buddha and Patanjali inculcate that violence can be overcome by non-violence,[3] but none of them ever contemplates it on a political and governmental level. There is a tendency among western pacifists to interpret Buddha as a non-violent resister.[1] This is correct so far as Buddha's opinion about individual behaviour is concerned, but it is wrong to think that Buddha condemned warfare as such. It is true that he advised the king of Kosala against war on the Sakya republic but this was not on grounds of non-violence.[2] In the classic discussion of his political philosophy, where he prescribed techniques for the maintenance of power in a republic, he is totally silent about non-violence. When his opinion was asked about the probable success of the Magadhan imperialism against the republican states of eastern India, he does not condemn warfare as such.[3] In political practice, neither the Buddhist king Ajatasatru nor the Jaina kings like the Nandas ever thought of violence being contradictory to Dharma.[4] Hence we do maintain that this notion that political violence is against Dharma is specifically the view of Asoka. We have instances of theorists before Asoka who maintain that violence is against Dharma so far as individual life is concerned. Asoka raised a problem which so far was concerned only with individual ethics to the level of governmental or kingly ethics. In the evolution of this idea the dominant factors were the influence of the psychological revulsion of Asoka at the horrors of the Kalinga war as well as the broadening of the Buddhist idea of non-violence. This view of Asoka marks a definite repudiation of the Kautilya view that political imperialism by violence is included in the scheme of the Dharma of the king.

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[1] Rock Edict xiii. The original word Dharma has been retained, instead of the "moral conquest" used by Mookerji. Otherwise, interpreters and translators, translate and comment upon Dharma as they like. A concrete example of the hopeless misinterpretation of "conquest by Dharma" is by Sinha, *op. cit.*, pp. 198-199.

[2] Rock Edict xiii.

[3] Weber, *op. cit.*, p. 121.

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[1] R. V., i, 10, 125.

[2] Chandogya Upanishad, iii, 17 ; viii, 15. According to Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development* (New York, 1936), pp. 80-81, the Ahimsa commandment was born not out of a feeling of pity but out of the idea of keeping pure from the world and only in later days did Ahimsa adopt the motive of compassion. He thinks that although Ahimsa postulates the doctrine of the like nature of things, still it does not arise from compassion but from the general principle of non-activity resulting from Indian world-and-life-negation. As I see it, the insistence on Ahimsa beginning with Buddhism and Jainism is a part of the change in the fundamental thought-structure of India, a change apparent in the transition from Vedic objectivism to the Upanishadic psychic subjectivism.

N. Dutt, *Early History of the Spread of Buddhism and the Buddhist Schools* (London, 1925), p. 8, holds : "The doctrine of Ahimsa was an offshoot of the Metta feeling which embraced not merely the negative restraint upon causing pain to any living creatures but also positive acts of charity and love, removing or attempting to remove distress, wherever existing and whatever form they might assume." But there is no historical foundation for this view, since the concept of Ahimsa has an Upanishadic genesis.

[3] न हि वेरेन वेरानि समन्तीध कुदाचन ।
अवेरेन च सम्मन्ति एस धम्मो सनन्तनो ।—Dhammapada i, 5
also यो पाणमतिपातेति......मूलं खनति अत्तनो । *Ibid*, xviii, 12-13.
वितर्का हिंसादयः कृतकारितानुमोदिता लोभक्रोधमोहपूर्वका
मृदुमध्याधिमात्रा दुखज्ञानानन्तफला इति प्रतिपक्षभावनम् ।
अहिंसा प्रतिष्ठायां तत्सन्निधौ वैरत्यागः ।—Yogasutra ii, 34, 35.
Cf., धर्मं समासतोऽहिंसां वर्णयन्ति तथागताः ।
शून्यतामेव निर्वाणं केवलं तदिहोभयम् ।
—Aryadeva, Chatuhsatakam xii, 23.
Contrast न दोषो हिंसायामाहवे—Gotamadharmasutra x, 16

6. *RAJADHARMA*

We shall now analyze the concept Rajadharma—the Dharma of the king, as referred to in the Dharmasutras, the Mahabharata and the Manusmriti. Although these books were written at different historical periods, we have deliberately chosen to treat them together for the sake of coordination and this for two reasons. First, these books are definitely influenced by the Brahmanical world-view, and by Brahmanical I do not mean here necessarily the view of the Brahmin caste but the view propounded in the Vedas and the Brahmanas as distinguished from the Upanishadic idealism and Buddhism. Second, these books treat the functions and duties of the king under the term Rajadharma. Common theological and philosophical presuppositions and the common concept of Dharma, which comprehends the facts and phenomena of individual, social and political life, impart a great similarity to the views set forth in these books and therefore we are justified in treating them together.

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[1] Richard Gregg. *The Power of Non-Violence* (Philadelphia, 1934), pp. 90, 202.

[2] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 110 ; Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 300.

[3] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 46.

[4] Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization*, *op. cit.*, pp. 277, 203, 240.

The Dharmasutras are the products of the period from the seventh to the third centuries, B. C. and even later.[1] Out of the Dharmasutras developed the later Dharmasastras.[2] The chief Dharmasutra works are those of Gautama, Baudhayana, Vasistha and Apastamba. These books try to outline the canons of social conduct and also deal with royal duties, civil and criminal law. They also contain references to the social customs of those times, but they are didactic and normative in their standpoint and any writer who constructs out of them a picture of the historical institutions and polities of those times will be mistaken. They can only supply some general hints and notions but no exact reference to what was actually taking place in the society of those times.

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[1] P.V. Kane in his *History of Dharmasastra* Vol.II p.965 says that according to the Dharmasastra the king is not only the head of the civil administration and the fountain of the justice, but he is also the final controlling authority in preserving religious and spiritual institutions. The king is to punish the people for the breaches of the religious and spiritual codes. I think that Kane fails to point out the distinction between internal motivation and external action. Only breaches in external action could be punished by the king. But internal motivation which is the essence of spiritual life could not be controlled by the coercive mechanism of the state.

[2] Julius Jolly, *Hindu Law and Custom* (Calcutta, 1928), p. 2, says : "In the Dharmasutras...are always found particular sections about the law of inheritance, law of government, legal procedure and other features of law proper as it was taught and traditionally handed down in the oldest schools of the Brahmans. Even in those cases where the Dharmasutras are called by the general designation, Dharmasastra in Mss. they can be easily recognised by their style which they have in common with other Sutra-works such as, for example, the grammatical and the philosophical Sutras. Their connection with the Vedas is most evident where they are still handed down as part of a greater collection of Sutras belonging to one or another Sakha of the Veda, such as, e.g. the Apastambiya, the very numerous metrical works which have come down to the present Dharmasutras composed partly or wholly in prose, first in form, inasmuch as they are throughout written in verse, mostly in simple slokas...Yet these works, to which the Manava-Dharmasastra, the most esteemed and illustrious of all Indian law-books, belongs, appear partly to have originated out of the older Dharmasutras and are, therefore, at all vents, connected with the Vedic literature, indirectly at least."

The notion of social duty is central in the Dharmasutras. According to Gautama the Vedas are the source of Dharma.[1] He also mentions the traditions and practices of those who know the Vedas and act in accordance with the Vedic injunctions as another source. Apastamba holds the consensus of those who know the Dharma and the Vedic literature to be authoritative about Dharma.[2] Baudhayana regards the Vedas to be the primary source of Dharma, the second is the Smriti. In their absence the properly initiated and disciplined persons are the authority on Dharma.[3] Vasistha hails the views of the Brahmins learned in the Vedas, in matters of Dharma.[4] The Mahabharata glorified the notions of non-violence and compassion in its view of Dharma. "He who is the friend of all, is devoted to the good of all, through actions, mind and speech, he knows Dharma."[5] The true and eternal Dharma is non-maliciousness towards all creatures, in action, mind and speech, as well as compassion and gifts."[6] The Mahabharata refers to a

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1. Pandurang Vaman Kane, *History of Dharmasastra* (Poona 1930), I, 4.
2. धर्मज्ञसमयः प्रमाणं वेदाश्च ।—Apastamba, I, 1, 2, 3 ; also
यत्त्वार्य्याः क्रियमाणं प्रशंसन्ति स धर्मो यद्गर्हन्ते सोऽधर्मः ।
3. उपदिष्टो धर्मः प्रतिवेदम् । स्मार्त्तो द्वितीयः । तृतीयः शिष्टागमः ।
4. वेदस्मृतिविहितो धर्मः, तदलाभे शिष्टाचारः प्रमाणम् ।
5. Santiparva, cclxi, 9.
6. *Ibid* lxii, 21. Returning to the integral connexion between Dharma and kingship the Santiparva (ix c, 4, 5, 8) says :—

राजा चरति वै धर्मं देवत्वायैव गच्छति ।
न चेद्धर्मं स चरति नरकायैव गच्छति ॥
धर्मे तिष्ठन्ति भूतानि धर्मो राजनि तिष्ठति ।
तं राजा साधु यः शास्ति स राजा पृथिवीपतिः ॥
उच्छिद्यते धर्मवृत्तमधर्मो वर्तते महान् ।
भयमाहुर्दवारात्रं यदा पापो न वार्यते ॥

According to the Santiparva, *Ibid*, 12-20 and 33, Dharma has been created period of human existence when there was no coercion and no king. People were guided by Dharma and the prevalence of Dharma led to a completely stable existence.

Manu exalts Dharma to the status of the supreme principle of human life. If Dharma is maintained it preserves the person who maintains it, but if it is violated it ruins the violator.[1] According to Manu there are four sources through which Dharma can be known. The first is the Veda, the second, the Smritis, the third, the ways of life and conduct of good people and the fourth, what pleases the soul or self of a man. This latter source of Dharma postulates the possibility of a situation involving a conflict between the institutionalized structure of political power and the dictates of human conscience. Manu, however, does not raise the question in this Lutheran and Kantian form and hence does not answer it. According to Manu, Danda or the royal power of punishment in its double aspects of coercion and protection is equated with Dharma. This is important because it shows the great importance which Manu attaches to punishment in social life. Judical conflict should be settled with reference to Dharma in Manu's opinion. According to Manu the king shall establish a law what may have been practised by the virtuous, by such twice born men as are devoted to Dharma provided it be not opposed to the customs of countries, families and castes. He says that Dharma has to be protected because if Dharma is allowed to be defeated by non-Dharma, it means that the councillors are as good as dead.

This analysis of the sources and function of Dharma leads us to the question of the meaning of Rajadharma. The word Raja means a king. It is a very common word in Hindu

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by the God Svayambhu for the good of living beings. A king is he who conforms to the norms of Dharma ; one who transgresses them is a Vrishala. Hence Dharma should be served with avidity and eager intensity because Adharma leads to social chaos :—

अधर्माः संप्रवर्त्तन्ते प्रजासंकरकारकाः ।

[1] Manusmriti, viii, 15; also—

आचारः परमो धर्मः श्रत्युक्तः स्मार्त्त एव च । (Manuji, 108)

अर्थकामेष्वसक्तानां धर्मज्ञानं विधीयते । (*Ibid*, ii, 13) political literature and is found from the Vedas onwards.[1] The Dharmasutras prescribe a number of duties for the king and these are supposed to have Vedic sanction. The king was to wield the sceptre of punishment and if there was any miscarriage of justice or if the culprit escaped, the king was not only to compensate for the loss but to perform penance. This involves the notion of extra-political sanctions on the king for the violation of his duties. There is a great emphasis in Rajadharma on the idea of the protection of the fourfold social order. But in spite of this emphasis we do not find any support for the idea that the concept of Dharma implied some notion of the "balancing of the principles of authority and responsibility". We can only speak of a moral responsibility of the king and that also in a vague sense of "debt" to the people as found in the Asokan inscriptions. But we should not read into the ancient texts highly technical and legal constitutional notions. The Mahabharata speaks interchangeably of Dandaniti and Rajadharma but it gives primacy to the latter because it groups the chapters dealing with political matters under the heading of Rajadharma. According to this book the security and expansion of the Vedic sacrificial system is dependent on the king's performing his duty. It conceives of the personification of Dharma as a god and identifies the king with that. It also speaks of the Dharma of the Kshatriya and comprehends under it self-abnegation, universal compassion, insight into the affairs of the world, security and social betterment by curing the diseased and afflicted. It says that the king who practices Dharma approximates to the position of a god while he who does the reverse goes to hell.

Manu advocates the supremacy of Dharma.[2] He says that if the king transgresses the injunctions of Dharma then he is smitten to death by the Danda which is full of divine lustre. The king according to Manu should also take into cognisance Dharmas of castes, countries, guilds and families in settling the peculiar Dharma of each section.[1] Manu is a strong advocate of the moral roots of political power. He says that through want of discipline and humility (विनय) many kings have perished. Vena, Nahusa, Sudas—the son of Pijavana, Sumedha and Nemi perished because they neglected the concept of Vinaya. On the other hand, by virtue of Vinaya, Prithu and Manu (the first king) gained political power, Kubera acquired immense wealth and Visvamitra obtained the status of a Brahmin. Manu is an out-spoken champion of the moralisation of the concept of Dharma to which he ascribes a tenfold content—contentment, forgiveness, self-control, non-stealing, purification, self-restraint, intellectual firmness (धीः), knowledge, truthfulness and abstention from anger. This tenfold Dharma was to be adhered to constantly by all the four Ashramas (Manusmriti vi, 91-92).

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[1] दिवो नपाता विदथस्य धीभिः क्षत्रं राजाना प्रदिवो दधाथे।
—R. V., iii, 38, 6.

[2] Manusmriti vii, 10.
कार्यं सोऽवेक्ष्य शक्तिं च देशकालौ च तत्त्वतः।
कुरुते धर्मसिद्ध्यर्थं विश्वरूपं पुनः पुनः।

The Rajadharma is definitely monarchical in its orientation. The attempt to comprehend all political things under the Dharma of the king shows that Dharma is to be equated with the totality of all social and political as well as individual duties, obligations and functions of the king. The Arthasastra of Kautilya also had a monarchical orientation since it only devotes one chapter to the republican states. But as we have seen, the definition of the Arthasastra conceives of it as the science of the acquisition and protection of territories. Contrasted with the Arthasastra, the Rajadharma chapters of the Dharmasutras, the Mahabharata and the Manusmriti are less emphatic in their conception of politics as an independent branch of knowledge. Kautilya writes a systematic treatise on things political. The Rajadharma tradtition produces no independent work. The Dharmasutras devote only a very small section to political things. The Mahabharata is a great epic and only in one book of it do we find political discussions. Manu has only one chapter on Rajadharma.

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[1] Manusmriti, viii, 41 :—

जातिजानपदान्धर्माञ्श्रेणीधर्मांश्च धर्मवित् ।
समीक्ष्य कुलधर्मांश्च स्वधर्मं प्रतिपादयेत् ॥

This verse is of immense sociological significance because it indicates the role of custom, conventions and tradition in social and political life. The king is not regarded as the lone regulator of the political universe. He is not the determinate human superior issuing decrees and arbitrary dispensations. He has to operate in a multi-associational society. The various partial societies have their own particular Dharma whereby they manifest their will. In setting the peculiar law of each and therely in facilitating social and political accommodation these Dharmas are significant—

(i) जाति धर्म—Dharma of castes.

(ii) जानपद धर्म—Dharma of Districts (*e.g.* of Kuru, Kasi etc., or of the inhabitants of one and the same village.

(iii) श्रेणी धर्म—Dharma of merchants and husbandsmen.

(iv) कुल धर्म—Dharma of families.

7. *DHARMA AND POLITICAL ETHICS*

The discussion of Rajadharma would not be complete without a discussion of the relation between the notions of Dharma and political ethics. It is often asserted that some Hindu writers separate the science of ethics from the science of politics because they prescribe the use of assassination, espionage, etc. Before we discuss the problem I would like to refer to a few of such views held by Hindu writers. Kautilya refers to various means by which the enemy should be assassinated. He advocates espionage and battle of intrigues, gives a long list of drugs and black magic to ensure the destruction of the enemy and even goes to the length of asserting that money should be made by royal agents by playing upon the religious credulity of the people.[1] Hence some scholars say that according to Kautilya the end justified the means. In the Mahabharata, Bharadvaja says that a king desirous of prosperity should slay the individual who thwarts his purpose, be this person even his son, brother, father or friend. With reference to the behavior of a king, he says: "When wishing to smite he should speak gently, after smiting he should speak gentler still, after striking off the head with his sword, he should grieve and shed tears."[1] The remnants of debt, fire and enemies increase over and over again, and hence the king should not tolerate the remnant. According to Bhisma, the king should learn both the path of Dharma and that of non-Dharma.[2] Bhisma advocated the seizure of the property of all except the Brahmins and ascetics in times of crisis. He justified his view on grounds of the value of self-preservation. He further says that this policy is in accordance with the nature of Dharma of a Kshatriya. These views have occasioned the following comments by two modern Hindu writers. Ghosal writes with reference to Kautilya: "When we turn.........to consider...... the author's attitude towards religion and morality, we find him following, as might be expected, in the footsteps of the early masters. We find him, in other words, frequently inculcating rules of a grossly unscrupulous nature on the plea of public interest and without the least pretence of moral disapproval. Thus Politics, distinguished as it is in the system of the Arthasastra as a separate science is, as before, further separated from the science of Ethics."[3] With reference to certain views of the writers mentioned in the Mahabharata Bandyopadhaya states: "......the further importance of the Rajadharma chapters lies in the fact that they show a decided tendency towards the separation of ethics from the sacerdotal canon and in some chapters we find even a tendency towards the separation of politics from the traditional lines of ethical enquiry.[4]

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[1] Cf., M. Winternitz, *Some Problems of Indian Literature* (Calcutta, 1925), p. 106 : "There is a strange discrepancy between this strict Brahmanical religiosity of our author, and the unscrupulousness with which the same author recommends all kinds of cunning tricks, in which religious rites and religiosity of the people are abused for political purposes... In this respect the author of the Kautilya Arthasastra may be compared to Machiavelli who does not shrink back from recommending the most abominable means for attaining an end, but is, at the same time, a most orthodox Christian and very religious. On the other hand, the often heard designation of Kautilya as 'the Indian Machiavelli' is only partly justified. There is one marked differenee between the Indian and the Italian author. The latter is above all a historian who derived his methods from the lesson of history. The historical point of view is entirely foreign to the author of the Arthasastra, who is a pure theoretician and only asks : which methods are useful to a monarch for gaining and maintaining power and which are not?"

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1. Santiparva, cxl.
2. Santiparva, lxxx, 5.
3. Ghoshal, *op. cit.*, p. 148.
4. Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 271; also cf., Benoy Kumara Sarkar, *The Positive Backbground of Hindu Sociology* (Allahabad, 1921), II, 30-31.

Before we analyze this problem of the relation between politics and ethics, we would like to say a few words about the Hindu view of ethics. Since the post-Vedic days great stress was laid on truth as a cardinal moral virtue.[1] The Vedic poets pray for attaining truth by rejecting the untruth. In the Upanishads there are examples of kings who follow a moral life of philosophic detachment and inward contemplation. In Buddhism is found the concept of Sila which is the generic name for five cardinal moral virtues. The Yoga philosophy refers to the universal "great vows" of truth, non-violence, non-stealing, non-accumulation, and non-adultery.[2] But notwithstanding the distinction between truth and untruth[3] in the Vedic literature and the Buddhistic notions of Vinaya—discipline and Sila, Hindu writers do no speak of social versus ethical or political versus ethical. The notion of Varnashrama—the four castes and the four orders, all with their assigned specific tasks and duties—makes the problem of the extent to which a good citizen can be a good man meaningless. There is no conflict between the pursuance of political life and the contemplation of Brahman. According to the Greek thinkers the citizen was to particitate in civic and political activities and was to mould his life according to the ideals and patterns of the constitution. This implied that the virtues of the citizen were to be formulated relative to the spirit of the constitution. A good citizen in oligarchy will mould himself according to the oligarchic spirit and a good citizen in democracy will mould himself according to the spirit of democracy. Thus relativism is characteristic of the virtues required from a good citizen. But the virtues of the good man were regarded as absolute and not relative to any specific constitution. Hence the virtues of the good man and those of the good citizen did not coincide in imperfect states. Only in the perfect state will the good citizen be also a good man. This distinction between the virtue of the good man and the good citizen is a very important point in Aristotle's *Politics*. But the sociology of the Varnashrama is oriented not to the political and constitutional differences but to the notion of Svadharma. The performance of one's own duties is the uppermost consideration. A good Kshatriya is one who faithfully adheres to the duties of the Kshatriya. A good Sudra is one who is faithful in the performance of his own specific Svadharma. There is no implication of superiority or inferiority of status. According to the Bhagavadgita whosoever performs his Svadharma, finally gains by virtue of that the realization of Brahman. Hence there is no conflict between the political, the social or the ethical. Adherence to Svadharma will be a social task, it will also serve the good of the kingdom, it will be an ethical imperative and if performed with the spirit of disinterestedness it will also lead to divine realization. As a matter of fact, I would say that according to the Vedic view, which was given a philosophic basis in the Mimansa system, there is no conflict even between the temporal and the spiritual. A man has to perform his own Dharma and this will result in the attainment both of mundane prosperity and spiritual good. The notion of the conflict between this world and a divine world is further obliterated by the metaphysics of Vedanta according to which each human being is in essence the absolute.[1] Due to ignorance he is bound by the limitations of empirical particulars and relative phenomena. He can attain the ultimate knowledge and realize his eternal spiritual essence. There is really no qualitative transition from the terrestrial status to the divine status. A man does not pass from the earthly city to the divine city after death. There is no conception of two distinct cities or two different kingdoms. It is only one homogeneous reality. Only because of the blinding power of ignorance man does not know his inmost self which is spiritual. If the separatist particularizing action of egoistic ignorance ceases, man comes to realize the supreme spirit. There is no existence of any worldly phenomena or ignorance for him. He is aware only of the eternal spiritual presence. Hence there is a fundamental difference between this philosophical outlook and the view of those thinkers who maintained a basic qualitative difference between God and human beings. It is the virtual difference between spiritual monism and religious monotheism. Thus the idea of Varnashrma and the metaphysical views of the Vedanta warn us against reading Aristotelian[2] and Augustinian[3] ideas into Hindu social philosophy.

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[1] For ethical ideas in the Brahmanas, H. Oldenberg : *Vorwissenschaftliche Wissenschaft*, pp. 20 ff., S. Levi, *La doctrine du Sacrifice dans les Brahmanas*, pp. 156 ff., Levi quoted in Winternitz, op. cit., p. 208n. says : "Morals have found no place in this system : the sacrifice which regulates the relationship of man with the gods is a mechanical operation which acts by its innermost energy ; hidden in the bosom of nature, it only emerges under the magic action of the priest." "It is indeed difficult to conceive of anything more brutal or more material than the theology of the Brahmanas; the notions which custom has slowly refined and clothed with a moral aspect, surprise us by their savage realism". Keith also is very sceptical of any ethics in the Brahmanas. For a different view, Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* I, chapters "The Hymns of the Rigveda" and "The Transition to the Upanishads".

There is no justification for B. M. Barua's view, *Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*, p. 196, that the origin of Parsvanath's चातुर्यामसंवर, Mahavira's five great vows and of Buddha's five moral precepts पञ्चशील lies in the पञ्चाग्निविद्या of Pravahana Jaivali.

[2] जातिदेशकालसमयानवच्छिन्नाः सार्वभौमा महाव्रतम् ।—Yogasutra, ii, 31. The Mahayana Buddhism refers to the "पारमिता"—the perfectibility of transcendental Virtues.

[3] दृष्ट्वा रूपे व्याकरोत्सत्यानृते प्रजापतिः ।
अश्रद्धामनृतेऽदधाच्छ्रद्धां सत्ये प्रजापतिः ।—V. S. xix, 77.
अग्ने व्रतपते व्रतं चरिष्यामि तच्छकेयं तन्मे राध्यताम् ।
इदमहमनृतात्सत्यमुपैमि ।—V. S. i, 5.

According to the Varnashrama theory each man is to pursue the task assigned to him in accordance with his particular caste and particular order in life. A king has his own duties. He has to carry on the duties of the Kshatriya householder. So long as he is true to his duties which have been prescribed by the Vedas and elaborated by the Smritis he is a good man and is a good citizen. So long as he is a householder he is caring for his mundane prosperity. When the time comes for retirement, he can give up political duties and concentrate on austerities, meditation and God-realisation. From this type of synthetic world-view Kautilya and the other writers discuss the duties of Dharmas of the king. If Kautilya prescribed a dynamic game of power, he is not conscious of doing something intellectually shocking. If he would have been conscious of saying something against Dharma, he would not have said : "The king who administers (the kingdom) according to Dharma, evidence, history and institutional practices and royal edicts, will be able to conquer the whole world bound by the four quarters."[1]

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[1] B. A. U., 1, 4, 10 ; Chandogya, vi,
Cf. Samkara on the Brahma-sutra 1, 1, 4 :—
"तस्मान्नावगतब्रह्मात्मभावस्य यथापूर्वं संसारित्वम् । यस्य तु यथापूर्वं संसारित्वं नासाववगतब्रह्मात्मभाव इत्यनवद्यम्......ब्रह्मात्मैक्यावगतिस्त्वप्रतिज्ञातेति तदर्थो युक्तः शास्त्रारम्भः । अथातो 'ब्रह्मजिज्ञासा' इति । तस्मादहं ब्रह्मास्मीत्येतदवसाना एव सर्वे विधयः सर्वाणि चेतराणि प्रमाणानि" ।

[2] Aristotle, *Politica*, iii, 1176 b ; *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1130 b, discusses the question of the identity or otherwise of the virtue of a good man and a good citizen.

[3] St. Augustine's theory of the transmutation of the terrestrial social consciousness into the illuminated divine consciousness. *De Magistro*, *Retractations*, *Confessions* and *The City of God* discuss Augustine's substitution of Plato's dialectic by the theory of illumination.

Kautilya prescribes four ways of conquering the earth and after having given the details of each he says that having conquered the earth the king should enjoy it according to his own Dharma.[2] He refers to three types of conquerors according to the criteria—whether they are satisfied with mere submission or with submission and monetary gains or with destruction of the enemy.[1] He calls the third by the name of Asuras—demons, perhaps implying thereby his disapproval of the ways of ruthless power-seekers. According to the traditional Hindu view which is fully subscribed to by Kautilya it is the duty of a Kshatriya king to expand his territories and conquer the enemies. Rama and Krishna, who are regarded as incarnations of God, take recourse to some actions which can be considered against Dharma, but those actions have been regarded as necessary for the maintenance of Dharma itself. Kautilya, it is true, catalogues the ways of poisoning and drug-making, but it is only necessary for the pursuit of warfare which it is the duty of a king to undertake. Hence from the theoretical standpoint of the philosophical implications of social Dharma we do not see how Kautilya

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[1] Arthasastra, iii, 1, English translation by me.

[2] Arthasastra, xiii, 4 ; Kautilya describes the four ways of conquering territories :—

(1) After having seized the territory of the enemy close to his country, the conqueror (विजिगीषु) should direct his attention to that of the Madhyama king ; this being realized, he should catch hold of the neutral king (उदासीन).

(2) In the absence of the Madhyama and neutral kings, the king should fascinate and please the hearts of the enemy's subjects. (गुणातिशयेनारि प्रकृतीः साधयेत्). Then he should direct his attention to other remote enemies. (ततः उत्तराः प्रकृतीः).

(3) In the absence of the circle of the states to be conquered, he should conquer his friend or his enemy by hemming each between his own force and that of his enemy or that of his friend respectively. (शत्रुणा मित्रं मित्रण वा शत्रुमुभयतः संपीडनेन साधयेत्).

(4) He may put down an almost invincible immediate enemy (शक्यमेकं वा सामन्तं साधयेत्). Having doubly enhanced his power by this victory, he may proceed against a second foe ; having trebled his strength by this victory he may attack third.

These are the four methods of conquering the earth. Kautilya prescribes five methods of reducing a fort to submission :—

(1) उपजाप—Intrigue.

(2) अपसर्प— Espionage.

(3) वामन—Winning over the affections of the people in the enemy's territory.

(4) पर्युपासन—Siege.

(5) अवमर्द—Attack.

But having outlined these technics for amassing imperialistic power, Kautilya faithfully pays his homage to the concept of स्वधर्म—जित्वा च पृथिवीं विभक्तवर्णाश्रमां स्वधर्मेण भुञ्जीत ।

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[1] Commenting upon the historical and political factors behind the exaltation of warfare in ancient Indian thought, P.C. Chakravarti, *The Art of War in Ancient India* (Dacca, 1941), p. 192, says : "In the congeries of small states into which India was habitually divided, often without natural frontiers marking them off into separate geographical units, military strength was the only guarantee not merely against strong rivals in the neighbourhood but against the subtler forces of internal disintegration. But there was perhaps a deeper reason behind this ceaseless advocacy of war. The Hindus, it is well known, had evolved a synthesis out of the heterogenous mass of customs, traditions, values, tastes, and beliefs, held by the various tribes and races inhabiting this vast continent. This synthesis was already a well established fact before the rise of Maurya empire, and was never seriously disturbed till the advent of Islam. But there was nothing corresponding to this cultural unity in the political sphere. From very early times, therefore, men longed to set up a common political organisation for the whole country. This longing gave birth to the concept Cakravartin or Sarvabhauma.... The motive force behind the endless campaigns and expeditions of the Mauryas and the Guptas, of the Gurjara-Pratiharas, the Palas and the Rastrakutas does not seem to have been mere ambition, a passion for conquering for the sake of conquering, but a conscious or unconscious urge to bring the whole country under one single hegemony."

discards ethical and moral considerations.[1] He would not prescribe that a Vedic student or an ascetic should give up studies or ascetisism and take to warfare because to do so would amount to transgressing Dharma. Every person has his own Dharma and if he tries to puruse it efficiently he is not committing any sin.[2] As has been already pointed out, Kautilya never repudiates the transcendental goal accepted in the contemporary society. It cannot be said that Kautilya separates politics from ethics in view of his acceptance of the traditional theological goal of the attainment of heaven, as well as of ethical virtues like self-restraint and discipline.[3] He has his own ideas of professional ethics which is in consonance with the concept of Dharma[4] which is a generic term and comprehends political, social, ethical and religious considerations.[5]

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[1] Ethics can be divided into two sections—personal ethics and socio-political ethics. So far as personal ethics is concerned, Kautilya is an emphatic and determined exponent of the moral philosophy of kingship. He is remarkable in his insistence on the conquest of the senses. In the Arthasastra, ix, 7, he says that intensity of lust and other appetities provokes one's own people while lack of policy creates enemies. Hence according to him sensuality and impolicy are species of demonic actions (तदुभयमासुरीवृत्तिः). In his remarkable stress on the conquest of passion Kautilya appears to me to be a sage and seer and not a mere political thinker. But according to the framework and method of argumentation of those days conquest, even relentless and ruthless conquest, was a part of the socio-political ethics (राजधर्म) of the king. Kautilya prescribed technics of imperialism. It is true, however, that he tends to become an unscruplous imperialist.

[2] Adhering to this traditional Hindu theory of the supreme validity of स्वधर्म, Manu says that fighting is the धर्म of the king.—

समोत्तमाधमै राजा त्वाहूतः पालयन्प्रजाः ।
न निवर्तेत संग्रामात्क्षात्रं धर्ममनुस्मरन् ॥ Manusmriti vii, 87.

[3] दैवमानुषं हि कर्म लोकं यापयति । अदृष्टकारितं दैवम् ।... अचिन्त्यं दैवमिति ।—Arthaśastra vi, 2.

[4] Cf. N. C. Bandyopadhyaya : *Kautilya* p. 47 : "Kautilya's social ideal was very high. Indeed it was higher for the age in which he lived. Yet, in spite of this, his enemies accuse him for his inhuman methods in politics. But... Kautilya strove for a higher tone in social and political life. The inhuman methods of waging war for attaining supremacy in polities are indeed to be found in his book but, they are the usages of the world in which he lived and were not his own inventions."

[5] We have tried to analyse the concept of the Dharma of the king according to Kautilya. If we take up an idealistic or intuitional ethical approach we can say that he is unmindful of moral consideraions. Suppose we adhere to the code of morality of the New Testament or of Buddhism or of Leo Tolstoy, then we can criticize Kautilya. But so long as we want to discuss what ethical and moral considerations Kautilya had in mind and how far did he remain

Passing now to an analysis of the views of Bharadvaja who has been regarded as the advocate of cold, calculating treachery and heartless cruelty, we find that some scholars have been busy condemning him rather than understanding his philosophical presuppositions and sociological conclusions. Of course what Bharadvaja says looks shocking if divorced from its context. But the occasions of the discourse should be remembered. Yudhisthira asks Bhisma in the Mahabharata how a king should act when Dharma and people have declined and ceased to function and robbers and evil-mongers are infesting the country. Bhisma narrates to him the dialogue of Bharadvaja which inculcates a policy for times of crisis. The Sanskrit word Apaddharma or the Dharma to be followed in time of trouble and crisis has its use and operation when normal activities are not performed due to the appearance of abnormal difficulties. According to a Hindu notion, this "Dharma of crisis" can allow a man to transgress some of the injunctions of the Dharma of ordinary normal life. But this "Dharma of crisis" is certainly never the routine way of action. More than that, Bhisma quotes Bharadvaja's statements to the effect that these so-called base and cruel measures should never be used, except to counteract the machinations of enemies. "A person (or king) should never act in accordance with these rules. These measures laid down by me should be taken recourse to only in times of extremes of distress. Inspired by the motive of doing good to you, I have said this for instructing you in counteracting the use of these measures by the enemy."[1] Hence in view of these presuppositions and conclusions of Bharadvaja we are doing an injustice to him if we say that he negates all moral and ethical considerations. He is not formulating a complete political philosophy but is trying to prescribe

faithful to them, we should confine ourseleves to studying the problem as to whether he was conscious of deliberately presenting any goal or code of action and behaviour which would be unethical and immoral. We have no evidence to show that Kautilya knew he was saying something against Dharma. It is quite a different matter if his view of Dharma may strike us to be morally shocking or at least morally neutral to a critic trained in different notions of social ethics. But notwithstanding this theoritical defence of the conceptual structur of Kautilya's politics, we can say that from a normal moral standpoint, his political ideals and methods appear ruthless and relentless.

[1] Santiparva, cxl, 70, my English translation.

some measures which could be used only in extreme cases and only to foil their use by the enemies.

So far as the immorality in the statecraft of Bhisma is concerned, it should be borne in mind that his prescription of the policy of unjust financial extortion from subjects occurs in the last chapter of the Rajadharma section of the Santiparva, which markes the trasition to the Apaddharma chapters of the book. Bhisma refers to those techniques of extortion only when Yudhisthira asks the former's views about how a king should act when the treasury is empty, the army is small, and he has not friends and allies and is troubled by enemies. Hence here also is present the same situation of the "Dharma of distress". Bhisma is emphatic in his statement that nothing can equal the Dharma of a king but the situation is complicated in times of distress and requires a different policy. He definitely indicates his disapprobation from the standpoint of normal times, of the techniques used in times of distress. He is still careful to assert his settled and ultimate political view that in times of peace, one should not desire treasury or heaven or any covetable object by transgressing the canons of Dharma. But he says that when people are put to extreme troubles then they can maintain themselves by taking recourse even to unrighteous means. Thus we find that the problems of Kautilya, Bhisma and Bharadvaja were different from the modern juxtaposition of politics and ethics. They have to be understood in terms of Dharma and "Dharma of distress."[1]

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[1] I was very happy to discover that D. Mackenzie Brown in his book *The White Umbrella* has almost a similar approach to the problem of realism and Dharma in Hindu political thought. He says : "These rules of diplomacy provide us with some of the most cold-blooded Machiavellian realism in the history of political theory.... Such politics, however, were considered proper only in times of national disaster, or, at least, they and their material objectives were relegated to a comparatively low scale of value in contrast to the high codes and goals of the Dharma—especially in the field of domestic administration. (P. 23). He adds further : "In its political phases, a notable feature of the *Santiparva* is the contrast between the rules laid down for normal government and those propounded for critical periods. The section dealing with periods of disaster contains some of the most cold-blooded realism in the history of political theory. Unless the modern reader fully appreciates the tenacity and restraining power of Dharma in traditional Indian government, he may easily conclude that cynicism is the guiding tenet of the author of *Santiparva*. But behind all the brutal expediencies there remains an ultimate accountability to the rule of Dharma" (p. 37).

8. *POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVADGITA*

The most elaborate discussion of the relationship of Dharma and violence has been attempted in the Bhagavadgita. The occasion of the teachings contained in this philosophical poem is the desire of withdrawal from warfare of Arjuna, the hero of the Pandavas, when the latter were arrayed in battle to fight their enemy, the Kauravas. Arjuna is affected by a sense of deep grief and remorse at having to fight his own kith and kin for the sake of mere gains and political acquisitions. To pacify his feelings of grief and terror, Krishna, who is supposed to be the incarnation of the God Vishnu in Hindu tradition, puts forward various arguments to support warfare for the maintenance of Dharma. The metaphysics of political violence as found in the Gita is something unique in Hindu social philosophy. In the Upanishads and Buddhism, in spite of the ethical doctrine of non-violence, the question of political violence is not raised. Asoka for the first time condemns political violence as being opposed to Dharma. But in spite of the reference to love and transcendental good resulting from a "conquest by Dharma" no metaphysical discussion of the problem of political violence is found in the inscriptions of Asoka. The Gita discusses the problem of political violence not only as an ethical question but raises the problem to a metaphysical level.

The Gita provides ample opportunity for the exercise of dialectical and philosopical skill, to philosophers and interpreters.[1] Samkara interprets it as a document of monistic metaphysics which relegates all human actions to the secondary and lower phenomenal level. The school of Ramanuja understands the

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[1] "According to Holtzmann it is a Vishnuite remodelling of a pantheistic poem ; according to Hopkins it is a Krishnaite version of an old Vishnuite poem, which in turn was a late Upanishad; according to Deussen it is a late product of the degeneration of the monistic thought of the Upanishads representing the period of transition from theism to realistic atheism ; according to Garbe it is the text-book of the Bhagavatas revised in a Vedantic sense by the Brahmanas ; according to Macnicol it is rightly to be described as an Upanishad which, though it has more unity than most of the kind, contains interpolations emphasizing the view of one school or another" ; H. C. Raychaudhry, *The Early History of the Vaishnava Sect* (Calcutta, 1936).

Gita as a gospel of metaphysical Vishishtadvaitism and devotional mysticism.[1] The Gita has been one of the most important intellectual foundations of modern Indian nationalism and hence political leaders of modern India have interpreted it in their own way.[2] Lokamanya Tilak regarded the gospel of disinterested action, as an independent and even primary way to God-realisation, to be the central teaching of the Bhagavadgita.[3] Aurobindo interprets the Gita as a metaphysic of the fusion of spiritualized action and supramental mysticism.[4] I feel that all these positions can be partially substantiated by quoting some verses or other of the Gita. None of these interpretations is the final and decisive word on the scripture.

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[1] Ramanuja's Bhasya on the Gita, ii, 12 ; xiii, 2.

[2] The Gita profoundly influenced the life and thought of Vivekananda, Tilak, Malaviya, Gandhi, Shraddhananda, Lajpat Rai and Aurobindo. The gospel of selfless action of the Gita was interpreted to imply a selfless fight against British imperialism. The idea of the eternal substantiality and immutability of the Atman was a great solace in a struggle in which the two sides were unevenly balanced.

[3] According to Tilak the central emphasis of the Gita is on Karmayoga harmonised with knowledge and devotion. The import of the Gita is to explain the character of the great men of action (कर्मवीर) by means of the fusion of Advaita Vedantism and Bhakti.

तस्मात् सर्वेषु कालेषु मामनुस्मर युध्य च ।—B. G. viii, 7.

Tilak is constantly referring to the superiority of the Karmayoga of the Gita to the concept of action as held in the Mimansa philosophy and in Kantian criticism, Comtean positivism and Mill's utilitarianism but does not criticize the social conservatism of the Gita.

"गीता का मुख्य उपदेश यह बतलाने का नहीं है, कि समाजधारणा के लिये कैसी व्यवस्था होनी चाहिए। गीताशास्त्र का तात्पर्य यही है, कि समाज-व्यवस्था चाहे कैसी भी हो, उसमें जो यथाधिकार कर्म तुम्हारे हिस्से में पड़ जायँ, उन्हें उत्साहपूर्वक करके सर्वभूतहितरूपी आत्मश्रेय की सिद्धि करो"

Bal Gangadhara Tilak, *Gita-Rahasya*, Poona, 1925, p. 496.

[4] Sri Aurobindo, *Essays on the Gita*, 2 vols. (Calcutta). The highest message of the Gita, according to Aurobindo, is the transmutation of human activity into a comprehensive divine activity, after the integral realisation of spiritual consciousness. A supreme divine realisation and a spirit of self-surrender make possible a divine work raised above the petty tumults of the human mind and the partial limitations and determinations of the ego. But I feel that Aurobindo exaggerates the esoteric side of the Gita and has not been successful in evolving a consistent theoretical scheme harmonising cosmic transcedence and the human activity of the God-becoming man. He unduly minimises the force of the ethics and the metaphysics of political violence which have been elucidated with tremendous vehemence in the second chapter of the Gita.

As I see it, the Gita, as it stands today, is an attempt towards the synthesis of the theory of social action, Samkhya dualism and Vedantic monism. Hence the majority of the interpreters emphasize only those verses which corroborate their own specific presuppositions. Therefore, I think that the various interpreters from Samkara downwards referred to above are only partially justified in their points of view. The references to warfare in the Gita are interpreted by Mahatma Gandhi as referring allegorically to the eternal battle between the good and the evil raging in human hearts.[1] I do not see any historical or literary justification for such a standpoint in the Gita. More than that, there was no necessity for referring to non-violence in the Gita. The person to whom the teachings are addressed had already suffered a physical and moral crisis and was going to renounce warfare and perhaps even become a monk. It was to convince him of the necessity and moral justifiability of war that the Gita was taught. Hence I think that historically and also from the standpoint of the actual literal meaning of the text of the book, it is the classic defence of warfare for the preservation of Dharma. We shall now analyze the various reasons and grounds advanced by Krishna to impel Arjuna to join the battle. First, the social reasons for the participation in a war for the maintenance of righteousness shall be discussed. Second, we shall expound the metaphysical justification of violence.

In the beginning of the book Krishna appeals to Arjuna to take the bow and fight, on the very pragmatic grounds of the attainment of concrete results in this life and heaven after death.[2] He also says that if Arjuna would not fight he would lose his prestige and the loss of honour for a distinguished person would be a greater evil than death itself.[1] He is very emphatic in asserting that if Arjuna were victorious he would gain prestige and enjoy the earth but even if he died he would enjoy the blessings of heaven because he would die while performing his duty or Dharma.[2]

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[1] Mahatma Gandhi, Anasaktiyoga (Ahmadabad); In *Non-Violence in Peace and War*, Ahmadabad, 1942, p. 449, Gandhi says: "He who would be *anasakta* (selfless) has necessarily to practise non-violence in order to attain the state of selflessness. Ahimsa is, therefore, a necessary preliminary, it is included in *anasakti*, it does not go beyond it...I interpret the Gita to mean that, if its central theme is *anasakti*, it also teaches ahimsa".

[2] Bhagavadgita, ii, 37. The abbreviated form B. G. has been used for the Bhagavadgita.

The main reason, then, for the defence of war is the notion of "one's own duty."[3] The "inherently natural duty (Karma) of the Kshatriya is bravery, brilliance, courage, intentness, not running away from the battle, generosity, and exercising authority (over subject people)."[4] This scheme of duties of the Kshatriya caste to which Arjuna belongs has been fixed by God himself and hence should not be transgressed. If any person renounces his own particular vocation and wants to take up the duties of another caste, he creates social confusion.[5] According to the Gita, the man who is engaged in the performance of his own duties which have befallen him as a result of his inherently natural qualities acquires perfection. He can obtain the highest perfection by worshipping "that being from which creation proceeds and who is immanent in the Universe," with the disinterested but devoted performance of his duties.[1] Sometimes it would appear that one's inherently natural duty is full of faults but still it should be performed because it is difficult to find any activity or object that is not mixed up with some kind of defect.[2] Hence one should perform his functions, even if the duties of somebody else may appear capable of easy performance. Such a performance of one's duties does not result in any evil.[3] Therefore Krishna says : "Besides, even if you consider your own duty, you ought not to falter, because there is nothing more meritorious to a Kshatriya than warfare enjoined by duty. And O Partha ! this war, which is indeed a door of heaven, found open without effort, falls to the lot of only those Kshatriyas who are fortunate. But, if you will not carry on this (for you) righteous warfare, then you will have abandoned your duty and lost your honour, and incurred sin".[4] Thus, according to the Gita, performance of one's duties leads to no sin and warfare being a part of the duty of the Kshatriya is absolutely a moral duty.[5] This view clearly shows that according to the

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[1] B. G., ii, 36 ii, 32.

[2] *Ibid.*, ii, 37.

[3] Zeno, the founder of Stoic philosophy, is credited with having popularised the notion of duty in Western thought. Although the notion of duty developed under Hebraic and Christian influences, Kant was the greatest influence in modern western thought emphasising duty as the central category in moral existence. Cf. Plato : "And when individuals are doing their own work, are they doing what is just or unjust ? What is just, certainly." 1 *Alcibiades* 127. "And the division of labour which required the carpenter and the shoemaker and the rest of the citizens to be doing each his own buisness, and not another's, was a shadow of justice,and for that reason it was of use ? Clearly. But in reality justice was such as we were describing, being concerned however, not with the outward man, but with the inward, which is the true self and the concernment of man"—*Republic,* 443. Often the Platonic theory of social stratification is compared with that of the Gita. The concept of division of labour is equivalent to the गुणकर्मविभागशः of the Gita but judged in the perspective of the context Plato's orientation is sociological while that of the Gita is theological. This conclusion is substantiated by Plato's remarks concerning the Phoenician myth : "for if the son of a golden or silver parent has an admixture of brass and iron, then nature orders a transposition of ranks, and the eye of the ruler must not be pitiful towards the child because he has to descend in the scale and become a husbandman or artisan, just as there may be sons of artisans who having an admixture of gold or silver in them are raised to honour, and become guardians or auxiliaries."—*Republic* 415. The Gita, on the other hand, "tolerates" the other castes e.g. स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा-शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् ।"

[4] B G. xviii, 43. The English translation is by B. S. Sukthankar who has translated Tilak's *Gita Rahasya* into English.

[5] The concept of social harmony dependent on the adherence to the ideal of mutuality, reciprocity and intelligent cooperative interdependence is mainly a Hellenic conception and it has been stressed in modern times by the positivists and the sociologists of the Solidarity school. But this conception is not foreign to Indian thought. It is very true that there is no exact concept

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in Sanskrit answering to harmony. But there are at least two ssuggestions in the Bhagavadgita which support the notion of social cooperation. First, Arjuna had emphatically stressed the significance of the maintenance of the Dharmas of the castes and the eternal Dharmas of the family. (जातिधर्माः कुलधर्माश्च शाश्वताः). This shows that he believed in the continuity of tradition through adherence to the social customs and family conventions. Secondly, some conception of social cooperation is implied in the concept of Yajna, through which all people are to make efforts for total betterment :

परस्परं भावयन्तः श्रेयः परमवाप्स्यथ ।—B. G. iii, 11.

[1] B. G., xviii, 46.

[2] *Ibid*, xviii. 48.

[3] *Ibid*, xviii, 47.

[4] *Ibid.*, ii, 31-33.

[5] The concept of Svadharma—one's own duty, has often been compared to the Kantian view. According to Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, Abbot's E. T., p. 305 : "Virtue is not merely a self-constraint, but is also a constrant according to a principle of inward freedom, and therefore by the mere idea of duty, according to its formal law." "The agreement of an action with law of duty is its legality ; that of the maxim with the law is its morality. Maxim

Bhagavadgita the notion of one's duty or Dharma is equaivalent to caste duty and not to rational duty. According to this view there can be no conflict of individual reason and socio-moral obligation. The latter in conclusive.[1]

Furthermore, protection of the virtuous and destruction of the unrighteous is the purpose for which God incarnates himself in human form.[2] In this case the party of the Pandavas is favoured by the incarnation of God because they are fighting for their rightful political share in the kingdom. The Kauravas are the party representing unrighteousness. Hence if Arjuna would participate in the warfare he would not only be discharging his own duties but would cooperate in the maintenance of the social structure for the preservation of which God himself has been embodied in human form. He would be doing a duty dear to God himself.

So far, the social grounds for the justification of violence and warfare have been analysed. Henceforward the metaphy-

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is the subjective principle of action, which the subject makes a rule to itself." (*Ibid*., p. 282). But it should be pointed out that there is one great difference between the Kantian moral rigorism and the categorical imperative and the standpoint of the Gita. According to Kant internal moral judgment is an essential precondition of the moral quality of an action. Although the Gita inclulcates that a man's Karma, Dhriti and Buddhi should be Sattvika—pure, still it makes no correlation between autonomous rational judgment and action.

[1] Comparing the Gita's notion of spiritualized activity with Fichtean ethics' Schweizer, *op. cit.*, pp. 192-93 says : "Because he promises a world-view of ethical world and life affirmation, Fichte has to attribute the importance of ethical activity to the participation by man in the play staged by God. Therefore he ventures on the violent proceeding of defining ethics in quite general terms as the subjection of the world of the senses to reason. Starting from the conception of Divine activity which he has formed for himself, he gives human activity a meaning. In the Bhagavadgita, on the other hand, man plays a part in the drama from a blind sense of duty, without seeking to find out its meaning, and, along with that, the meaning of his own action.

The relationship between the philosophy of Fichte and the Bhagavadgita goes so far that Fichte too regards as the highest activity that by which man enters into the service of the order of the universe. The duties which in his opinion stand in the front rank are not, as would be in harmony with the spirit of the age, the general duties based on the ethical nature of man, but those which result from his social position, his profession and his special endowments." Against this view of Schweitzer I would only refer to the sociological and metaphysical arguments which have been advanced by the author of the Gita to support the plea for righteous violence which was involved in the specific duties of Arjuna. There is no 'blind sense of duty' involved there.

[2] B. G., iv, 7-8.

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sical foundations shall be discussed. These are threefold : (1) the idea of human beings being only agents and only apparent doers of actions, God himself really doing everything ; (2) the idea of the immortality of the human self—the Atman who is neither slain, nor does he slay anybody ; (3) the metaphysics of non-dualism—whatever is, is the absolute. According to this view there is no real subject and no objective predicate but one absolute spiritual being. From this point of view nobody is slain, nobody is the slayer. It is all one unitary being. This view entails the distinction between two levels of predication—at the empirical or the phenomenal level and at the transcendent or absolute level, a view found both in the philosophies of Samkara and Nagarjuna.

Arjuna was reluctant to engage in warfare because he did not want to commit the cruel deed of killing. Krishna showed him the "cosmic form" of God which is eloquently described in the Gita.[1] In this world-vision Arjuna found that all the great heroes he was reluctant to kill were already rushing towards their death. He perceived that the scheme of cosmic sacrifice was proceeding forth without any human instrumentality, by the sheer force and dynamism of the omnipotent will of God. When Arjuna has seen this "world vision" and was psychologically convinced of the egoistic vanity involved in thinking that it was he who would be killing somebody, Krishna told him that God was the destroyer of peoples, the "immensified death" to kill everybody.[2] He passionately pleaded that even if Arjuna would not be there, the different warriors in the various armies were all going to die. Hence he exhorted him to fight and win the opulence of the earth and not be worried by the feeling over the imminent death of soldiers because they were already dead and he was only an apparent instrument for their death and not the real cause of it.

This same idea that Arjuna is not the real killer but only the apparent agent or instrument is also substantiated from the Samkhyan view. According to the Samkhya philosophy there are only two substances in the world : (1) nature and (2) human selves—Purusas.[1] The human Purusas are entangled in the web of nature and thus destroy their luminous purity and state of detachment. Krishna asks Arjuna to realize that all actions are really performed by the executive operative mechanism of nature.[2] Human beings are only silent spectators. Hence even from this Samkhya standpoint Arjuna is to realize that he is not the real doer but that the deeds are performed by nature and hence he should not be worried and should begin the fight, in the self-consciousness that he is not the real doer. His real essence or self is the detached inactive self.

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[1] B. G., xi, 15-46.

[2] Sri Aurobindo, *The Ideal of the Karmayogin* (Calcutta, 1945), pp. 56-61.

Arjuna has been worried over the probable death and destruction of his relatives because, after all, the opponents—the Kauravas—are descended from the same ancestors. But Krishna tells him that death is only a natural stage of the self, as natural as childhood or youth or old age. Contacts with nature are responsible for happiness and unhappiness and hence a calm man should not be affected by them. The body is only the "cloth" of the immortal and immutable self. "He who thinks that it (the owner of the body or the Atman) is the killer, or, who thinks that it is slain, both these do not possess true knowledge, (because) this (Atman) does not kill, and is not killed... O Partha ! that man who has realized that it is indestructible, everlasting, unborn, and inexhaustible, how and whom can he cause to be killed, and how and whom can he kill" ?[1] On this ground of the immortality of the self, there is no need of anxiety over the body being destroyed. The self is one's real being while the body is only an external garment. In its long history every human self has several bodies and would have several more in the future. Thus the idea of the immortality of the soul and its transmigration into countless bodies relieves a person of remorse at the prospect of bodily death.

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[1] B. G., xiii, 29. Oldenberg, Jacobi, Garbe and Pischel hold that originally the Samkhya accepted Anatmanism (non-soul doctrine) and Buddhism derived this idea from them.

[2] त्रिगुणमविवेकि विषयः सामान्यमचेतनं प्रसवधर्मि ।
व्यक्तं तथा प्रधानं तद्विपरीतस्तथा पुमान् ।—Samkhyakarika, 11,
पंचैतानि महाबाहो कारणानि निवोध मे ।
सांख्ये कृतान्ते प्रोक्तानि सिद्धये सर्वकर्मणाम् ।
अधिष्ठानं तथा कर्ता करणं च पृथग्विधम् ।
विविधाश्च पृथक्चेष्टा दैवं चैवात्र पञ्चमम् ॥
तत्रैवं सति कर्तारमात्मानं केवलं तु यः ।
पश्यत्यकृतबुद्धित्वान्न स पश्यति दुर्मतिः ॥
—Bhagavadgita, xviii, 13-14-16.

The third justification for violence is the enunciation of the ultimate metaphysics of absolute non-dualism. The dualities and pluralities that we see in the universe are only empirically real. From the highest standpoint there is only one absolute spiritual being. In the interest of social action and devotion which are postulated on the notion of dualism the Gita is always very careful to tone down the rigour of this kind of monistic metaphysics. The realization of the ultimate spiritual nature of human beings and the universe and the comprehension that everything proceeds from that one primal source, convince a man of the futility of egoism. A man of knowledge realizes that he is not the doer, nor is any act being really done.[2] If any person has attained this realization he is not bound by any ordinary moral or social conventions. He is beyond them. Hence the Gita says : "Who does not possess the belief that 'I am the doer.' and whose reason is unattached, such a person, even destroying other persons, cannot be said to have killed them. And that (action) does not bind him."[3] This passage conclusively points out that a person who has transcended egoism is not bound by the fruits of his actions. The law of Karma affects only the person who has not realized the absolute. The man of realization is above the bounds of the law.

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[1] B. G., ii 19; ii, 21.

[2] Winternitz, *op. cit.*, I, 429n says : "There is no murder or act of violence which could not be justified by this miserable sophistry. It is surprising that the pious readers of the Gita do not see this." But in defense of the Gita it could be said that only those acts of violence performed in the pursuance of one's own Dharma are justified behind which there is the consciousness of the immortality of the self and the transitoriness of the body.

[3] B. G., xxlii, 17 ; Cf. Samkara on this verse, "देहाद्यात्मबुद्ध्या हन्ताहमिति लौकिकीं दृष्टिमाश्रित्य हत्वापीत्याह। यथादर्शितां पारमार्थिकीं दृष्टिमाश्रित्य 'न हन्ति न निबध्यते' इति।"

Thus Krishna tries to convince Arjuna of the imperative necessity and justification of a war for the preservation of Dharma on these social and metaphysical grounds. The purpose of all the metaphysical discussions in the book is only to convince Arjuna that no sin is involved in warfare if one has the knowledge of the spiritual essence and the detached nature of human selves.[1]

This short sketch of the nature and influence of Dharma shows that all the later books adopted the Upanishadic view of Dharma being simultaneously a moral category equated with truth and a generic term for signifying the social duties of the four castes and the four orders. Buddhism emphasized the moral nature of Dharma and its concrete influence can be seen in the political philosophy of Asoka. The classic example of a defence of "one's own Dharma" meaning one's social duty is found in the Bhagavadgita. The word 'Dharma' also signified law, especially civil law, as in the Dharmasutras and in Kautilya's Arthasastra.

.6 *DHARMA AND NATURAL LAW*

In conclusion we shall first examine the significance of Dharma as natural law[2] and then discuss the view that the theory of sovereignty of Dharma or law was present in ancient India.

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[1] In explaining the central meaning of the Gita Samkara says : तस्यास्य गीताशास्त्रस्य संक्षेपतः प्रयोजनं परं निःश्रेयसं सहेतुकस्य संसारस्यात्यत्-न्तोपरमलक्षणम् । तच्च सर्वकर्मसंन्यासपूर्वकादात्मज्ञाननिष्ठारूपाद्धर्माद्भवति । He is faithful to the majority of the verses in the Gita which expound an ethics oriented to the metaphysics of absolute non-dualism. But he becomes dogmatic when he tries to construct the gospel of the Gita as teaching only non-dualism. Thus his comment on verse xviii, 73, करिष्ये वचनं तव अहं त्वत्प्रसादात्कृतार्थो, न मम कर्त्तव्यमस्तीत्यभिप्रायः, is absolutely false because as history records, Arjuna did engage in the battle. Hence my interpretation of the Gita which construes its metaphysics to be oriented to the justification of political violence (धर्म्याद्धि युद्धात्, धर्म्यं संग्रामम्) is more faithful to its text and to the historical tradition.

[2] The concept of Dharma has some similarity with the notion of *physis* (Nature) held by Aristotle. According to the latter, *physis* has six meanings : (1) The genesis of growing things ; (2) that immanent part of a growing thing, from which its growth orginally begins ; (3) the primitive or essential material of which any natural object is made ; (4) the

In the Upanishads we find the idea of Dharma as "force of force" but we do not find any notion of Dharma as natural law which could be binding on kings over and against their own duties or Dharmas. In Buddhism we find the partial triumph of naturalism as a metaphysic because Buddha condemned all theological godheads. He emphasized a logical and dialectical analysis of things and taught the formula of dependent origination but in his political ideas he did not draw any implication that the operation of this law, which he called the Dharma, would in any way affect political and social behaviour. The category of five orders is found in later Pali Buddhism : (1) Karmaniyama or order of act and result; (2) physical inorganic order ; (3) order of plants, the organic orders ; (4) order of conscious life ; and (5) order of Dharma.[1] But in spite of the notion of an universal order operating at various levels, no political conclusions were drawn from that. The concept of a cosmic norm did not imply that in the social and political realms also there operated a natural law of so indispensable and powerful an efficacy and force as to provide the criteria for human law-making. Attempts have been made to read the notion of natural law[2] in the statement of Apastamba, Vasistha, Baudhayana and Manu that one of the sources of Dharma is the conduct and opinion of those who have received Vedic education and are devoted to righteousness. But these authors do not imply any notion of the authoritative pronouncement of the virtuous man over-riding the edicts and commands of the organised political superior.

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source of the primal movement of natural objects ; (5) the essence of natural objects ; and (6) every essence in general.—Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, 4.

[1] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, I, 374.

[2] Sarkar : *Institutions and Theories*, p 208;

Cf., अनाम्नातेषु धर्मेषु कथं स्यादिति चेद् भवेत् ।
यं शिष्टा ब्राह्मणा ब्रूयुः स धर्मः स्यादशङ्कितः । –Manusmriti, xii, 108.
धर्मेणाधिगतो यैस्तु वेदः सपरिबृंहणः ।
ते शिष्टा ब्राह्मणा ज्ञेयाः श्रुतिप्रत्यक्षहेतवः ॥

There is the concept of natural law in the works of Hindu philosophers in the sense of the repudiation of supernaturalism, or the operation of an absolute spiritual law, or the manifestation of a cosmic order. A parallel of this kind of metaphysical natural law is found in the Mimansa conception of Apurva.[1] Apurva is the law whose operation ensures the future enjoyments of the fruits of sacrificial ceremonies performed in this life. The Mimansakas do not explain the multiple and various effects by the sole primal agency of the Godhead. Instead they take recourse to the concept of Apurva. Apurva provides a cosmic and transcendent connexion between the action and its consequences. Kumarila Bhatta cites scriptural testimony to indicate the operation of Apurva. Although criticized by Uddyotkara and Samkara and other Vedantists the concept of Apurva is very significant in the Mimansa system and to the extent that it is operative without the previous energisation of any theological

[1] "चोदना पुनरारम्भः" चोदनेत्यपूर्वं ब्रूमः । अपूर्वं पुनरस्ति, यत आरम्भः शिष्यते स्वर्गकामो यजेतेति । इतरथा हि विधानमनर्थकं स्यात् । भङ्गित्वाद्यागस्य । यद्यन्यदनुत्पाद्य यागो विनश्येत् फलमसति निमित्ते न स्यात् । तस्मादुत्पादयतीति । यदि पुनः फलवचनसामर्थ्यात्तादेव न विनश्यतीति कल्प्यते । नैवं शक्यम् । न हि कर्मणोऽन्यद्रूपमुलभामहे । यदाश्रयं देशान्तरं प्रापयति, तत्कर्मेत्युच्यते । न तदात्मनि समवेतम् । सर्वगतत्वादात्मनः । सर्वत्र कार्योपलम्भः सर्वत्र भावे लिङ्गम् । ननु तदेव देशान्तरादागमनस्य । न ह्यसत्यागमने किंचिद्विरुद्धं दृश्यते । यत्र समवेतमासीत्, तद्विनष्टं द्रव्यम् । तस्य विनाशात्तदपि विनष्टमित्यवगम्यते । आश्रयोऽपि विनष्ट इति चेन्न । भस्मोपलम्भनात् । सत्यपि भस्मन्यस्तीति चेन्न । विद्यमानोपलम्भनेऽप्यदर्शनात् । फलक्रिया लिङ्गमिति चेत् । एवं सत्यदर्शने समाधिर्वक्तव्यः । सौक्ष्म्यादीनामन्यतमद्भविष्यतीति यदि चिन्त्यते, कल्पितमेवं सति किंचिद् भवति **तत्रापूर्वं वा कल्प्येत**, तद्वेत्त्यविशेषकल्पनायामस्ति हेतुः, न विशिष्टकल्पनायाम् । अनाश्रितं कर्म भविष्यतीति चेत् । तदपि तादृशमेव । स्वभावान्तरकल्पनेन देशान्तरं न प्रापयिष्यतीति तादृशमेव । **तस्मादभङ्गी यजिः, तस्य भङ्गत्वादपूर्वमस्तीति** । किं चिन्तायाः प्रयोजनम् । यदि द्रव्यगुणशब्दा अप्यपूर्वं चोदयन्ति, द्रव्यगुणापचारे न प्रतिनिधिरुपादातव्यो यथा............. । तथा तर्हि सिद्धान्तो द्रव्यं गुणं वा प्रतिनिधाय प्रयोगोऽनुष्ठातव्य इति ।" Sabara's Commentary on the Mimansasutra ii, 1,5.

Godhead, it is very much analogous to a natural law. The conception of natural law can be also traced in the Nyaya-Vaisesika theory of Adrista—the invisible principle that governs human and cosmic action.[1] Adrista is a transcendent power of conservation of the merits produced by noble actions and demerits generated by evil deeds. In its later developments the Nyaya philosophers superimposed the agency of God as the supreme governor to the concept of Adrista. But in its earlier forms this Adrista was analogous to the conception of natural law. We also find some idea of natural law in the Buddhist view of the inexorable operation of the law of Karma without the mediation of any god, and in the Samkhya metaphysics of the cosmic procession from one primeval Prakriti or nature.[2] But it may be noted that all these four concepts and ideas (a) Apurva, (b) Adrista, (c) Karma and (d) Prakriti did involve some notion of moral causation along with natural causation. The idea of a purely mechanical immanental process of the movements of nature, effective without any primordial spiritual agency, is a feature of modern scientific developments.

But in spite of the prevalence of the notion of this kind of impersonal order or immanent moral law, we do not find any concrete specifications of a cosmic Dharma over and against the political order implying that any legislation against that cosmic Dharma is not binding. There are ample references to the different Dharmas of the different castes and orders, but no notion of a transcendent Dharma as the criterion of the several Dharmas of the social and political universe is found. In the chapter on civil and ceremonial law, Manu points out that the king was to decide the suits of men depending on the eternal law (धर्म शाश्वतम्) but there is no hint that this primordial Dharma transcends the Rajadharma. In the Hindu political works there is no idea of a conflict between the political Dharma of the king with a cosmic and eternal Dharma which lays down the principles of right and justice in an universal sense, anything contrary to that being automatically invalid. But although we do not find the concept of a transcendent super-political Dharma, still in the later development of Indian thought we find the notion of some kind of a universal and common Dharma. In the Manusmriti (X, 63) we find reference to a general Dharma (सामाजिक धर्म) which includes non-violence, truth, non-stealing, purification and self-restraint. The Santiparva (LX, 7-8) refers to nine moral virtues which are relevant to all the Varnas (सार्ववर्णिकाः). The Puranas further developed this notion. Nevertheless, no such principle that if the Rajadharma conflicts with this Samanya or Sadharan Dharma the former is to be neutralized was ever inculcated in Hindu political philosophy.

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[1] तद्विशेषेणादृष्टकारितम् । वृक्षाभिसर्पण मित्यदृष्टकारितम् । अग्नेरूर्ध्वज्वलनं वायोस्तिर्यग्गमनमणूणां मनसश्चाद्यं कर्मादृष्टकारितम् । अपसर्पणमुपसर्पणमसितपीतसंयोगाः कार्यान्तरसंयोगाश्चेत्यदृष्टकारितानि ।

—Vaisesikasutra, v, 2, 2, 7, 13, 17.

[2] For Samkhya :—

भेदानां परिणामात् समन्वयात् शक्तितः प्रवृत्तेश्च ।
कारणकार्यविभागादविभागाद् वैश्वरूपस्य ॥
कारणमस्त्यव्यक्तं, प्रवर्तते त्रिगुणतः समुदयाच्च ।
परिणामतः सलिलवत्, प्रतिप्रतिगुणाश्रयविशेषाद् ॥

—Samkhyakarika 15, 16.

Cf. Vachaspati on this—

"'समेत्योदयः समुदयः—समवायः, समुदयश्च गुणानां न गुणप्रधानभावमन्तरेण संभवति, न च गुणप्रधानभावो वैषम्यं विना, न च वैषम्यमुपमर्द्योपमर्दकभावाद् ऋते' –।

10. *NO THEORY OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF DHARMA*

Several writers on Hindu political thought have maintained that in ancient India Dharma was the sovereign. Some translate the word Dharma as law and uphold that the ancient Hindus maintained the idea of the sovereignty of law.[1] Sri Aurobindo has maintained that Dharma—the religious, ethical, social, political, juridic and customary law organically governing the life of the people was a greater sovereign than the king. This impersonal authority was considered sacred and eternal in its spirit and no secular authority had any right of autocratic interference with Dharma. "The king was only the guardian executor and servant of the Dharma, charged to see to its observance and to prevent offences, serious irregularities and breaches."[1] Radhakrishnan upholds that Dharma represents the totality of the institutions by which the commonwealis secured.[2] Bandyopadhayaya thinks that in ancient India the king never became superior to law.[3] He states that the Dharmasutras consider Dharma, *i.e.*, law above the king and above society. Jayaswal interprets Manu to be an advocate of the view that law, *i.e.*, Dharma, is the real sovereign and not the king.[4]

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[1] Beni Prasad, *Theory of Government of Ancient India* (Allahabad, 1927), p. 9 : "From the very nature of the social theory, government could not be regarded as sovereign in the Austinian sense of the term. It did not impart validity to the order; rather it shared in its validity. It could not alter it at will; other parts of it were as valid as itself. It sustained the social order but that was merely its function. It embodied the coercive

Our analysis of the concept of Dharma shows that these claims on behalf of the political importance of Dharma are exaggerated. Mookerjee is the most extreme advocate of the sovereignty of Dharma. He says: "Hindu thought counts Dharma as the true sovereign of the state, as the rule of law. The king is the executive called the danda to uphold and enforce the decree of Dharma as the spiritual sovereign."[5] The problem

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power of the community and was bound to use it in the social interest just as the priest or trader was bound to use his spiritual or economic power in the social interest. Sovereignty was really diffused throughout the community and was embodied in the Law which had its ultimte source in Divine will". But Prasad has confused two separate ideas. The concept of the supremcy of an immutable eternal law appeals to the theological and super-political realm of thought. The conception of the pluralists as popularised in Europe began as a reaction against Austinian positivism. In ancient Hindu thought and practice, Beni Prasad finds the simultaneous existence of the soveriegnty of Dharma and of the pluralitic approach to sovereignty. He fails to realize that the theory of the sovereignty of an absolute primordial law is basically a product of religious society which believes in eternal truth. Pluralism on the other hand is a modern western development and is the product of an industrial multi-group society.

[1] Sri Aurobindo, *Th Spirit and Form of Indian Polity*.

[2] Radhakrishnan, *The Hindu View, op. cit.*, pp. 108-9.

[3] Bandyopadhyaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 173, 286-7.

[4] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 58, 152.

[5] R. K. Mookerji, *Chandragupta Maurya and His Times*, p. 79; Mookerji, *Hindu Civilization, op. cit.*, p. 100.

of the sovereignty of Dharma can be discussed at two levels. First, talking in historical terms we have no evidence of any concrete state or kingdom in ancient India, where Dharma or its decrees were considered the sovereign.[1] It is up to them who hold this view of the sovereignty of Dharma to come forward with concrete proof and not merely rely on the statements of theoretical and normative books and interpret some of their statements as referring to an actual historical situation. Second, the problem can be discussed at the conceptual level. We have earlier rejected the view that ancient Hindus had a systematic and abstract notion of sovereignty. They talked in terms of the power of the king or the punishment of the king but did not conceive of the concept of an ultimate political superior. This does not mean the denial of the historical existence of political structures embodying sovereign power. No person who credits Bodin, Hobbes, Rousseau and Austin with having formulated the concept of sovereignty denies the historical existence of sovereign states in the ancient and medieval world before Bodin. But if, as we maintain, there was no concept of sovereignty as such, there is no use in speaking of sovereignty of Dharma. So far as the sovereignty of Dharma is considered, we find no mention of Dharma in the classic formulations of the elements of a commonwealth in Kautilya and Sukra. In spite of the saying in the Upanishads that Dharma is the "force of force", it remained only a moral category influencing political life. At best, we can say that the concept of Dharma was a very strong factor having political influence, and all theorists accepted its weight, but no explicit or implicit reference to its being the ultimate political power is found.[2] In practice also, there was no legal agency to control the transgressions of Dharma by a king. The comprehensiveness of the notion of Dharma prevented its identification with mere religious or divine law, and it also never meant exactly positive law in the modern sense.[1] It remained always a moral-philosophical norm for action, but never was conceived as the supreme political power.[2]

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[1] The late ancient South Indian inscriptions refer to such phrases as धर्ममहाराजाधिराज and धमयुवमहाराज—Lüders' *Inscriptions*, Nos., 1196, 1200.

[2] A very exaggerated idealism concerning the normative function of Dharma has been maintained by N. C. Sen Gupta, *Sources of Law and Society in Ancient India* (Calcutta, 1914), p. 27 : "The end of society was therefore the promotion of Dharma or the moral order of the universe. All law was viewed as subsumed under that conception. Law was therefore not a matter to be made or mended by human hands. It is eternally ordained and imbedded

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in the constitution of society and capable of ascertainment partly by revelation and partly by enquiry, in a spirit of reverence, into the nature of Dharma. The result of this was the development of a comprehensive idea of law which is the dream and perhaps the destiny of the sociological school of modern philosophical jurists." As we see it, if a parallel has to be sought for the conception of law under the comprehensive framework of Dharma it has to be found not in the modern legal philosophers like Savigny, Thibaut, Stammler, Jellinck or Pound but in the Mosaic conception of law or the Confucian.

[1] Benoy Sarkar argues that at least in one of its aspects or phases Dharma meant positive law. He says : "In Hindu analysis Dharma came to be defined as positive law also. The conception of law as राज्ञामाज्ञा (command of the king) in Kautilya's language *i.e.* as command enforced by sanction finds clear expression in the writings of Narada, Sukra, Jaimini and his commentator Sabara Swamy. In Narada's Smriti we are informed that the performance o duty having fallen into disuse, positive law (व्यवहार) has been introduced, and that the king as superintending the law is known as Dandadhara or wielder of Danda. The sanction is definitely mentioned in the Sukra-niti according to which the sovereign should categorically state in his commands that he would surely destroy by severe punishment those offenders who after having heard these decrees would act contrary to them". (p. 209, *Institutions and Thories of Hindus*). But I feel that this interpretation of Dharma is not correct because although Kautilya lists the commands of the king as one of the four sources for the settlement of disputes he does not call them Dharma. As the commands of the king (राजशासन) are the fourth factor, so according to Kautilya, Dharma is the first factor in the settlement of legal disputes. The late Prof. Sarkar seems to go beside the point when Narada's conception of Vyavahara is identified by him with Dharma. I am not arguing against the existence of positive law, i.e. explicit statutes and laws made, promulgated and executed by the king. My objection is on the theoretical level. I think that to designate the commands of the king there were other words like Sasana, Agnā (आज्ञा), which were used by Hindu thinkers. I do not think that Dharma as a concept was ever used to designate positive law.

[2] There is some similarity between Dharma and the German word *Recht*. Recht stood for both law and right. It signified not only law but also the spirit behind law. It implied both morality and law. According to Hegel it comprehended abstract right of contract and property, subjective morality of conscience and customary ethics of use and wont manifested in the family, the civil and economic society and the state. The Latin word *Jus*, the German word *Recht* and the Sanskrit word Dharma are similar in one fundamental sense that they comprehend the ideas of law and right simultaneously.

CHAPTER IV

THEORY OF KINGSHIP IN ANCIENT INDIA

1. *THEORY OF KINGSHIP IN THE VEDIC LITERATURE*

There are two definite theories of the origin of kingship in ancient India. The first is about the primeval election of the king. The second is about the divine creation of the king. We shall analyze the latter view in the next chapter. The idea that the first king was elected, possibly might have a fundamental relation to the actual institution of elective kingship in the ancient Vedic times. But in Kautilya or Bhisma or Manu we find no attempt to construct a systematic theory of elective kingship. Sometimes there are references to a pristine blissful and righteous state and to the later appearance of the institution of kingship to check some of the anti-social and morally destructive tendencies of man. But still, the theory of the "Great Elect" is not constructed to justify a philosophy of popular rights and authority. Hence it would be difficult to interpret this theory in terms of a developed contractual philosophy of political obligation.

In the Aitareya Brahmana occur the first references to the creation of a king. The gods and the demons were fighting.[1] The latter were victorious and then the gods decided that because they did not have a king they were losing the battle. Hence they proposed to "make" Soma their king and did so when all consented to that.[1] This account, of course, refers to the creation of a king but it should not be interpreted to mean "the elective origin of divine sovereignty."[2] We have repudiated the existence of the concept of sovereignty in ancient Hindu thought without denying the historical existence of sovereign states in ancient India. The fact that nothing except the mere creation of kingship is meant, is apparent from the study of the texts themselves. In passages previous to this one which refers to the creation of Soma as king, there are references to the "buying of King Soma".[3] We find reference to a hymn for the King Soma "who is bought and is being brought." This type of pedestrian adjective for King Soma should dispel the implication of any abstract theoretical notion of sovereignty. In the later Hindu tradition as represented by Sayana no attempt has been made to give a metaphorical meaning to this notion of the "buying of King Soma". Moreover, it is stated in the passage that the gods attributed their failure to the lack of a king. There is no explicit mention of the borrowing of the idea of kingship from the demons. As we know, kingship was a developing institution in the post-Vedic age and most probably this account is an attempt to exalt the institution of kingship by stating that even the gods need a king for victory against their enemies.

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[1] Discussing the historical identity of the Asuras—the demons, A. Banerjee-Sastri, *Asura India*, says: "the civilized world echoes with the dread name of the invincible 'hosts of Ashur'—the smoke of their holocausts impresses a permanent awe for the name Ashura far and wide in Egypt, Babylonia and Persia. Then came the struggle with the new Indo-European from the north. The Scyths of the Northern Steppes and the Persians from Iran destroyed Assyria. Persia took her place in the Near East. Young Greece of the Iron Age invaded the Aegean lands. The Vedic Aryans routed them in the land of the Sapta Sindhus, and the Indus Valley thus becomes the most eastern of Indo-European lands instead of a continuation of Egypt-Babylonia-Assyria-Persia-India outpost." (p. 3) "For to these Asuras, the too-long misunderstood descendants of Diti and her sisters, belongs the credit not only of an intelligent quiescence of the neo-Aryan Hindu Arya-Asura-Dasa body-politic but a composite patrilinear body-social recognising at the same time he mother-right and the Mother Goddess." (p. 137).

The Aitareya Brahmana contains another reference to the election of a king from amongst themselves by the gods. It occurs in the section on the "great consecration of Indra".[4] Indra is one of the most important of the Vedic gods. The gods, along with the great god Prajapati,[5] deliberated that they should consecrate Indra to kingship because he was the "most vigorous, the most strong, the most valiant, the most perfect, who carries out best any work." Hence they installed him to kingship. He was made to ascend a throne. Having ascended the throne he delivered a speech assuming political titles indicating his power. The gods thought that unless Indra's assumption of royal powers was publicly proclaimed he would not be able to perform any heroic work and hence they announced Indra as the great king. They considered his assumption of office as signifying the birth of military power, of the ruling caste, of the master of all living beings, of the destroyer of demons, and of the protector of Dharma. This account shows the great importance attached to the sacrificial ritualism in the Brahmanas. The "great consecration of Indra" was a form of consecration which could be used to anoint a kshatriya. It was a ceremony to indicate the political power of a king. There are historical references to various ancient kings having performed this kind of ceremony.[1] The Aitareya Brahmana mentions that all of them succeeded in conquering great regions throught it and it further asserts that : "A Kshatriya who is consecrated with this Aindra Mahabhisheka conquers all conquerors, knows all the worlds, becomes superior to all kings, gains renown and majesty, becomes self-created and self-ruled."[2] Thus we find here an explanation of the acquisition of power through anointment and consecration but no theory of "the origin of divine sovereignty of Indra."

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[1] A. B., i, 14.

[2] Ghoshal, *op. cit.*, p. 43 n.

[3] A. B., i, 12. In the Atharvaveda, vii, 91, 3, 4 ; xi, 6, 7. Soma is the moon. Hillebrandt, *Vedische Mythologie*, i, 274, 326 ; ii, 209-45 ; asserts that the Soma is the moon throughout the Vedic literature. In the Rigveda, Soma is sometimes the moon. The Brahmanas identify the Soma and the moon and the Naksatras are said to be the wives of king Soma. In the Yajurveda, the Brahmans claim Soma alone to be their king. The statement—सोमोऽस्मांकं ब्राह्मणानां राजा shows that the Brahmins had begun claiming immunities from the power of the king.

[4] A. B., viii, 12.

[5] Arthur A. Macdonell, *A History of Sanskrit Literature* (London, 1900), pp. 101-2.

The tradition about the origin of kingship in war against the Asuras or demons which we came across in the Aitareya Brahmana is also very vaguely referred to in the Saptapatha Brahmana. "Forsooth we are in an evil plight, the Asura-Raksas have come in between us ; we shall fall a prey to our enemies. Let us come to an agreement, and yield to the excellence of one of us." They yielded to the excellence of Indra. They said, 'Well then, let us contrive so that this (concord) of ours shall be forever imperishable. The gods laid down together

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[1] A. B., viii, 15.

[2] A. B., xxxix, quoted in Banerjee, *op. cit.*, p. 93.

(literally "cut off together part by part") their favourite forms, and desirable powers, one after another and said: 'thereby he shall be away from us, he shall be scattered to the winds, whosoever shall transgress this (çonvenant) of ours.'[1] This passage shows that the gods elected Indra to be their king and lead them against the Asuras.[2] This passage does not contain any advance over the Aitareya in ideas. We mention it here in order to indicate that this passage is misinterpreted by Sinha to contain an idea of "a covenant into which people entered to created a sovereign." "We have the origin of kingship or sovereignty—to the ancient Indians both terms appeared identical in meaning in a covenant that is indissoluble, and the the nature of kingship comprising the collective powers of the community voluntarily resigned."[3] I feel that Sinha is desperately busy reading Hobbes in the Satapatha Brahmana. In the body of the text of the book we do not find any Sanskrit words standing for political concord or political covenant.[4] The words, concord and covenant, have been put in by the translator to clarify the meaning, without the least suspicion that these words could lead to the acceptance of the notion that the passage in question is "very similar" to the "famous social contract theory."[5] Moreover, there is no ground for interpreting the Sanskrit word Dhaman, translated by Eggeling as desirable power, as the collective powers of the community.[6] There is no reference at all to the voluntary resignation of powers. What the Satapatha Brahmana is doing is to categorise the various successive steps in the great ritual called the Rajasuya. The description of the agreement of the gods amongst themselves is used as an illustration to show that the sacrificers and the house-holders should keep peace amongst themselves and not quarrel with one another in the midst of a sacrifice or other activities. There is no occasion here to describe the "Hindu conception of the pre-political state of existence," or the Hindu speculations about the origin of kingship. Contrasted with the Aitareya Brahmana we do not get here any significant idea either directly or indirectly relevant for political life. There is no mention of any battle between the Devas and the demons. The gods were separated and the "demons entered between them". It will require a great poetic imagination to read the notion of "endless strife" "like that of Hobbes" in the phrase "entered between them."[1]

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[1] S. B., iii, 4, 2.

[2] Sometimes this struggle between the Devas and the Asuras is interpreted in a metaphorical sense—as a metaphysical dialectic representing the battle between the forces of good and the forces of evil. We also find such ideas in the thought-systems of Zoroaster and Mani. The Chinese philosophy also speaks of a battle between Yan and Yin. Buddhism also has a notion of such struggle in the fight between Buddha and Mara.

[3] Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 73.

[4] The Sanskrit word *Tanunapatra* does not mean a political covenant.

[5] Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

[6] In R. V. x, 67, 2, we find reference to the Dhaman of the sacrifice; in R. V. i, 43, 9, there is reference to the Dhaman of the Rita. According to Oldenberg the term Dhaman indicated what is ordained while Hillebrandt prefers the simper sense of 'abode'.

In spite of that fact that we have denied the existence in the Brahmanas of any contractual conception of kingly authority or any "elective origin of divine sovereignty" we think that they left a legacy of the conception of kingship in terms of function. The specific mention that the installation of a king was necessary to win a battle gave rise to the idea that kingship has to be justified in terms of the performance of the duties assigned to it, and this idea had a great influence on later political thought. But despite this implicit notion of the institution of kingship being related to some need or necessity, the Brahmanas as a body of literature exerted their profound influence on the development of the ritualistic sacrificial system of worship rather than on political philosophy.

2. *PSYCHOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE BUDDHIST THEORY OF KINGSHIP*

We find the elaborate formulation of the theory of the "Great Elect" in the Buddhistic literature. In the Jatakas there is reference to the Mahasammata—Great Elect. The Mandhata Jataka speaks of the "chosen of all" as having been the first king in the beginning of creation.[1] But the theory of the "Great Elect" was comprehensively discussed only in the Digha Nikaya—perhaps the most important book in the early Buddhistic literature.[2] The theory occurs in an account of the cosmological speculations of the early Buddhists. Before we analyze the theory it will be convenient to state the main arguments as narrated by Buddha himself.

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[1] Sinha, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-73.

1. Description of the primeval conditions : when this world began to re-evolve after having passed away, it was inhabited by "beings made of mind, feeding on rapture, self-luminous traversing the air, continuing in glory." In this period there was no distinction of sex. Beings were recknoned as beings only.

2. After some time the earth with its savour was spread out in the waters. Some beings of greedy disposition tasted it and then craving entered into them. When other beings began to feast on the earth their self-luminance declined. When it was gone there was the manifestation of the sun and the moon and the appearance of the stars, night and day, the months and half-months, the seasons and the years. The beings continued for a long, long while, feasting on the earth.

3. Due to the appearance of evil and immoral customs, specifically "pride in their beauty," vanity and conceit, the savoury earth disappeared. After its disappearance outgrowths of the soil appeared, clothed with colour, odour, and taste. The beings feasted on the outgrowths for a long, long while and being well nourished the differences in their beauty became more manifest generating pride and conceit. Due to the growth of pride, the outgrowths disappeared. Then creepers appeared, the beings fed on them for a long, long while, but they also vanished due to the same phenomena of vanity and conceit. Then rice appeared and also sex differences. People divided off the rice fields and set boundaries thereto.

4. Then some greedy person stole another's plot and made use of it. He continued to do so even after he was chastised.

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[1] Bandyopadhyaya, *op. cit.*, p. 317 ; Law, *op. cit.*, p. 94.

[2] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, English translation by T. W. and C. A. F. Rhys Davids (London, 1921), III, 77-94.

Thus stealing appeared, and censure and lying and punishment became known.

5. Due to the presence of these evils the beings were greatly perturbed and "...those beings went to the being among them who was the handsomest, the best favoured, the most attractive, the most capable and said to him : come now, good being, be indignant, censure that which should rightly be censured, banish him who deserves to be banished. And we will contribute to thee a proportion of our rice."[1]

He consented to do so and was given a portion of their rice. He was called Mahasammata because he was chosen by the whole people. He was called Khattiya because he was lord of the fields. He was called Raja because he charmed others by the norm.[2]

The account of the origin of the universe and social organization as presented above is very important for political thought. First, it provided a metaphysics, different from the traditional, as the foundation for political speculation. So far, political thought had started with the assumption of the veracity of the Vedic and Upanishadic cosmology. In the Vedas the universe is supposed to be created by a godhead either through himself or through a sacrifice.[3] The Upanishads accepted the insight of the famous Nasadiya hymn of the Rigveda,[4] and represented the universe to be an emanation of, or born from, the absolute. The cosmology formulated by Buddha totally repudiated any theological godhead or philosophical absolute.[5] It is true that we have references to materialistic cosmological speculations in the Upanishads, but they are assigned a subordinate role and most often are mentioned as the views of some presumed opponents to be refuted. Buddha makes a revolutionary change in the world-view of those days. The Vedic view of the divine creation of the cosmos and of social organization made any materialistic political thought impossible. As a matter of fact, both in the Brahmanas and in the Dharmasutras it is not possible even to raise the historical question of socio-political origins. It is accepted that they are the creations of God. Manu starts with the fundamental presupposition that the the king had been created by God. Hence, the cosmology of Buddha started a new era in the realm of social investigations by stressing psychological factors rather than divine will.[1] It is of course true that the later Buddhistic writers were almost entirely concerned with eschatology, epistemology and theories of reality and did not advance the political and social insights contained in this dialogue of Buddha but nobody can deny that the Buddhist cosmology presented here is very important for political thought.[2]

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 88.

[2] *Ibid.*

[3] B. M. Barua, *Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy* (Calcutta, 1921).

[4] R. V., x, 129— (आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्नपरः किंच नास । also अप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन् ।

[5] Radhakrishnan and C. A. F. Rhys Davids are mistaken and unfaithful to the great body of Buddhist Pali literature in trying to supplement-Buddhism by an absolutistic metaphysics.

The state of existence, in the old days when social stratifications were absent, was one of great happiness according to this account. In the Buddhist view that in ancient times beings were "made of mind", we find the influence of the traditional Hindu psychology about the Linga or Sukshma Sarira, i.e., subtle body. The subtle body is an individual's real personality and accompanies the soul to wherever it goes in the course of its transmigrations.[1] The corporeal body is destroyed after death and because of being transient and perishable it is only an instrument for the action of the soul and the subtle body. The Buddhistic conception that in the olden days beings had no solid corporeal bodies but were only made of mind seems strongly influenced by the Upanishadic and Samkhya psychology of the subtle body.[2]

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[1] Cf. Masson Oursel, Grabowska etc., *op. cit.*, pp. 143-44 : "Jains and Buddhists were at once Yogins and sophists, in that they combined asceticism with dialectics. Against the Yogins they maintained that complete self-mastery is not an end but a means; against the sophists they held that there is a Dharma which holds good for all mankind. But this Dharma is different from that of the Brahmanic castes in that it does not consecrate rigid distinctions between men, and instead of aiming at governing life according to the world it aims at deliverance. The new sects were to take their stand midway between the anarchic individualism of the Yogins and sophists, who had broken away from the social organizations and poured scorn on all order of dignity and the orhodox regimentation of the different strata of the people in hereditary ways of life. They would found orders, which could only be entered on abandoning Brahmanic society, but which offered favourable conditions for the pursuit of salvation."

[2] A similar phenomenon with far more momentous consequences can be detected in western thought. Since the Renaissance, the rise of modern science led to the birth of a new cosmology and a new methodology. This new cosmology was the metaphysical foundation of the political thought of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke and others. The new methodology was incorporated by Descartes, Hobbes, Spinoza, Grotius etc. The profound intellectual revolution is apparent when we compare these post-Renaissance political thinkers with Augustine, Aquinas or Aegidius Romanus. But the Buddhist and Hindu thinkers mainly interested in the problems of individual destiny did not care for the working out of the social implications of the new metaphysical systems. Plato, Hegel and Sankara are idealist metaphysicians. Plato and Hegel draw sociological conclusions from their metaphysics. But Sankara can only relegate the empirical world to the realm of Maya.

Buddha not only describes the structural components of the beings of those days but also says something about their activities. These mental beings "feeding on rapture, self-luminous, traversing the air, continuing in glory" remain thus for a long, long period of time. This account is also influenced by the Upanishadic view of the state of the emancipated person. In some accounts of the Upanishads the realized person does not completely lose his individuality in the absolute but continues to have non-sensuous enjoyment.[3] The fact that the beings in the Buddhist version were self-luminous is also paralleled by the Upanishadic view of the self and the Samkhyan view of the Purusa—individual being. But there is a profound difference of orientation in the Upanishadic-Samkhya view and the Buddhist view. The former is concerned with a trans cendent state—the state of emancipation from the world. Buddha secularises the whole thing when he applies the predications of the emancipated self to beings "come to life a human". The secularistic note becomes dominant as the discussion in the dialogue proceeds. In the Upanishadic-Samkhya view an emancipated being is not subject to mundane evils and passions. But in the Buddhist view we find these original humans "made of mind", subject later to all the evil passions of greed, vanity, lust and theft.

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[1] Samkhyakarika, 38-41 ; Maitrayani Upanishad, vi, 10; Deussen *Allgemeine Geschichte der Philosophie*, I, iii, 497. The Samkhya explains transmigration by the concept of the भाव of the Buddhi while the Vedanta explains it by the theory of the maturation of Karma. The Mundaka Upanishad, iii, 2,4, contains the word Linga but there it has been used in a different sense.

[2] For the influence of the Upanishads and the Samkhya on Buddhism, see Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda*, *op. cit.*, pp. 535-551 ; Barua, *op. cit.* Hermann Oldenberg, *Die Lehre der Upanishaden und die Anffnge des Buddhismsus* (Gottingen, 1915).

[3] Chandogya Upanishad, viii, 2 ; *Ibid.*, viii, 12, 3.

The aim of Buddha is to construct a historical account of social origins and this he does on psychological foundations. The beings in the original state are caught by greed. Then appears the sense of social and individual superiority on the basis of differences in physical beauty. This kind of evil and mmoral custom of thinking in terms of superiority and inferiority on the grounds of physical attractiveness is the great curse and leads to the appearance of physical conditions, which progressively make physical life harder and more difficult. In due course of time sex differences appear and the attendent evils of lust come in and this leads to the institution of separate dwelling houses. "Then those beings feasting on their rice in the clearings, feeding on it, nourished by it, so continued for a long, long while. And in measure as they, thus feeding, went on existing, so did the bodies of those beings become even more solid, and the divergence in their comeliness more pronounced. In the female appeared the distinctive features of the female,. in the male those of the male. Then truly did woman contemplate man too closely, and man, woman. In them contemplating over much the one the other, passion arose and burning entered their body. They in consequence thereof followed their lusts. And beings seeing them so doing threw, some, sand, some, ashes, some, cowdung, crying : Perish, foul one ! perish, foul one ! How can a being treat a being so ?...That which was reckoned immoral at that time, is now reckoned to be moral. Those beings who at that time followed their lusts, were not allowed to enter village or town either for a whole month or even for two months. And inasmuch as those beings at that time quickly incurred blame for immorality, they set to work to make huts, to conceal just that immorality".[1] Besides lust, the factor that served most to disintegrate the pure state of resplendence was the institution of private property. "Come now, let us divide off the rice fields and set boundaries thereto And so they divided off the rice and set up boundaries round it."[1] This division of property was a great error since it led to stealing and with the appearance of theft emerged the evils of censure, lying and punishment. Thus in subsequent times the resplendent state is destroyed by the passions of lust and acquisitiveness. Hence the institution of the "Great Elect" has its immediate justification in the need for suppressing the socially subversive elements.

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[1] *Dialogues of the Buddha, op. cit.*, p. 85.

This account emphasizes the passions of vanity and conceit, lust and the accumulative instinct. All these are originally rooted in the disposition of greed.[2] Buddha gives no sound philosophical reason as to why the degeneration from the resplendent state is caused by the greedy disposition of some human beings. Where does this greed come from? Whey are some people proud of their physical comeliness? Very often Buddha would silence his interlocuters by stating that he does not want to go into barren metaphysics,[3] but he cannot have an excuse here because he himself has embarked upon the metaphysical question of the ultimate beginnings of things. Hence the ascription of greed to the beings who were leading a resplendent existence is only an unwarranted assumption. It is true however that this assumption is in line with the Buddhist psychology and helps Buddha to construct an account of social and political origins.

The analysis of the social evils as described in this dialogue will become clearer if we examine the foundations of the "coming into being" of individual life, which is a central tenet of Buddhist psychology. "Then the Blessed One, during the first watch of the night, fixed his mind upon the chain of causation in direct and in reverse order ; 'From ignorance spring the Samskaras (i.e., conformations), from the Samkaras springs consciousness, from conscionsness springs name and form, from name and form spring the six provinces (of the six senses, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body or touch and mind), from the six provinces springs contact, from contact springs sensation; from sensation springs thirst (or desire), from desire springs attachment, from attachment springs becoming, from becoming springs birth, from birth springs old age and death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection and despair. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering".[1] Here the primary importance is put on ignorance. Greed which is the first factor in the destruction of the resplendent stage is traced to ignorance—ignorance of the "fourfold Aryan truths." Although the account given above describes the causes of man's decline from the state of resplendence in great details, it does not solve the question as to the causes of the origination of this ignorance or this thirst and greed. This concept of ignorance occupies a central place both in the Buddhistic and the Vedantic systems. Its existence is one of the greatest problems for any spiritualistic and idealistic metaphysics.[2] Suffice it to mention here that according to Buddhism social and political life begins in the greed or the thirst of man which is due to ignorance. Once this ignorance is dispelled, the individual will be able to see things as they really are. The examination of the Buddhist view as to what happens to a person who is rid of ignorance and desire—whether he attains a positive or a negative state of final existence is of slender significance from the standpoint of political theory but has great importance from the standpoint of sociological world-view.[3] But the cardinal

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 87.

[2] Cf. इदं खो पन भिक्खवे दुक्खसमुदयं अरियसच्चं । योंय तण्हा पोनब्भविका नन्दिरागसहगता तत्र तत्राभिनन्दिनी सेयमीदं कामतण्हा भवतण्हा विभवतण्हा । Also refer to the Majjhaima Nikaya (Mahadukkhakhandhasutta).

[3] For reference to "अव्याकृत प्रश्न" Majjhima Nikaya (Culamalunkyasutta); Digha Nikaya (Potthapada Sutta).

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1. Mahavagga, i, 1, 1-3.
2. R. V. iv, 2, 11 ; Svetastvatara Upanishad, i, 9 ; v. 1.
3. Commenting upon the historical significance of Mahayanistic metaphysics of Nirvana (he could have in mind the concept of the Paramitas) Arnold J. Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial* (New York, 1948), says : "According to the extreme Buddhist view, the soul itself is part and parcel of the phenomenal world, so that in order to get rid of the phenomenal world, the soul has to extinguish itself. At any rate, it has to extinguish elements in itself which to the Christian mind, are essential for the soul's existence : for example, above all, the feeling of love and pity. This is unmistakably evident in the Hinayana interpretation of Buddhism, but it is also implicit in the Mahayana, however reluctant the followers of the Mahayana school may be, to dwell on the ultimate implications of their own tenets. The Mahayanian Boddhisattva may be moved, by his love

importance of greed or the thirst for life and becoming, in the genesis of family, private property and kingship has to be emphasized.

The dialogue does not specify in detail the nature of the Mahasammata, the "Great Elect". It could stand either for a king or a republican head. As is well known, Buddha himself came from the Sakiya clan which had a republican polity and his father was at one time the head or one of the heads of this state. Hence the political traditions of Buddha would show that possibly he would have a republican chief in mind. This supposition would gain added significance from the fact that the structure of the ecclesiastical organization founded by Buddha was also based on the model of the republican polities which followed many procedures designed to give an opportunity to the members to express their views freely. But the tradition about the "Great Elect" in the Jatakas shows that he was a king. According to Rhys Davids, Mahasammata was the name of a famous king in the beginning of time, who was the first king of the solar race and the legendary ancestor of many lines of kings. Hence most probably the term refers to a king and this conclusion would be corroborated by the title Raja.[1]

The dialogue clearly shows that the "Great Elect" was instituted by the people to settle social conflicts which had been generated by the psychologically deviant factors of greed and theft and desire. Since the "Great Elect" receives his authority from the people there is the assumption that political authority originally lies in the people who fix for him a portion of their produce. This choice by the people is motivated by the "Great

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and pity for his fellow sentient beings, to postpone his own entry into Nirvana for aeons upon aeons for the sake of helping his fellows to follow the path that he has found for himself. Yet this path is after all, the orthodox one that leads to salvation through self-extinction, and the Boddhisattva's sacrifice, though immense, is not irrevocable or everlasting. At long last, he is going to take that final step into the Nirvana on whose threshold he already stands and, in the act he will extinguish, with himself, the love and pity that have won for him the answering love and the gratitude of mankind."

[1] The term Raja was also used for republican chiefs and leaders. Rhys Davids, *C, H. I.* i, p. 177 says: "Raja...in this connexion does not mean king, but rather something like the Roman consul, or the Greek archon." Cf. the Arthasastra, xi, 1, लिच्छिविकवृजिक-मल्लक-मद्रक-कुकुर-कुरुपाञ्चालादयो राजशब्दोपजीविनः ।

Elect's" being "the handsomest, the best favoured, the most attractive, the most capable." But perhaps we would be reading too much into the ancient texts if we interpreted the concept of the "Great Elect" to mean that according to Buddhism political authority is based on consent. It is true that some sort of consensus is implicit in the Buddhist theory, but consent always implies an exact notion of the rights and liberties of the people which we do not find specifically or even indirectly mentioned here. Hence the "Great Elect" theory cannot be considered to be an exact formulation of the consensual theory of political authority, but there is no doubt that the beginning of such a theory is contained here. The full implications of this tradition were not drawn by later thinkers due to the pre-occupation of the Buddhist philosophers with metaphysics and the preponderance of the view of the divine origin of the king in the Brahmanical circles. But still the influence of this theory, directly or indirectly, can be detected in the later traditions which in spite of the acceptance of the divinity of the king maintained in some form also the idea of election. Perhaps no greater commentary on the Buddhist "Great Elect" theory was written than the following verse of Aryadeva, a later Buddhist philosopher: "What superciliousness is thine, (O King!) thou who are a (mere) servant of the multitude and who receivest the sixth part (of the produce) as thine wages."[1]

This theory of the "Great Elect" is sufficient to minimise the force of the charge often hurled against Buddhism that it is acosmic, pessimistic, anti-secularistic and transcendental.[2]

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1. Quoted in Ghoshal, *op. cit.*, p. 209.

2. Since the days of the older Upanishads we find a strong trend in Indian thought towards illusionism, asceticism and mystic negativism. It is difficult to point to one single factor as the cause of this phenomenon. It has often been said that the migration of the Vedic Aryans from the Punjab to the Gangetic plains intensified the speculative tendency by making the struggle for life easy. A racial explanation asserting the dilution of the blood of the Aryans by the intermixture of indigenous strains has also been fashionable with Gough and others. The Nazi anthropologist Hans Gunther also advocated this view. Sometimes the Kshatriya caste is credited with having developed the philosophy of monistic illusionism which led to a pronounced disenchantment from the older ritualistic creed. Perhaps a pluralistic explanation incorporating the point of truth from all these three theories may point the way towards the correct view. But it is an undoubted fact that Buddhism carried to the extremes

Buddha, of course, overemphasized the evils of greed and the thirst for becoming. He was conscious that the goal of individual Nirvana had to be pursued individually. There could be no collectivization of spiritual experiences. But both in this dialogue and in other places he recognized the existence of common social ends and interests. Society does require a common superior. By eliminating the individual coercive power of punishing thieves and robbers and by making the "Great Elect" the repository of the power of censure and punishment, the way was prepared for the emergence of the common good. The "Great Elect" rules in accordance with Dharma and thus he pleases the people. This reference to Dharma is significant. Dharma has a strong moral content in early Buddhism, and by stating that the "Great Elect" charms others by Dharma, Buddhism seems to accept that the existence of a political superior is concomitant with the emergence of the significence of Dharma. The full efflorescence of this idea we find in the political philosophy of Asoka.

This dialogue of Buddha enunciates a naturalistic origin not only of the "Great Elect" but also of the social order.[1] By a philosophical ingenuity, which to me seems incorrect, Buddha explains the origin of the fourfold social order. The "Great Elect" was chosen from the social circle of nobles. The Khattiya is so called because he is the lord of the field. The Brahmins

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the ascetic revolt against the claims of a materialistic civilization. There is a tendency in modern India to interpret Buddhism as positivism and socio-ethical idealism and to proclaim Buddha as the Auguste Comte born twenty-five hundred years earlier. Without denying the importance of some of the social and humanitarian projects and the cultural expansion outside India, inspired by the Buddhistic movement, no student of the earlier and later Buddhist philosophy can fail to notice its dominant pessimistic, and other-worldly orientation, notwithstanding the realistic trends of the Vaibhasikas and the Sautrantikas and the subtle dialectics of Dignaga, Dharmakirti and Santarakshita.

Certainly elements of a naturalistic cosmology are present in the account of the Mahasammata and this would support the view that there were realistic elements in early Buddhism and that Rosenberg is not correct in maintaining that early Buddhism is pure illusionism. The Mahasammata account is of considerable sociological significance. The only difficulty is that it did not initiate any large amount of further sociological and political investigation in the writings of later thinkers. In spite of the realism of this account, the philosophers of the Buddhist schools did not extend its implications.

[1] *Dialogues of the Buddha*, *op. cit.*, pp. 88-91.

are so called because they "put away (Bahenti) evil, immoral customs." The Vaisyas are named so because they, "adopting the married state, set on foot various trades (Vissa)." The others "that live on hunting, and such like trifling pursuits," are called Sudras. More important than this attempted philological explanation is the naturalistic explanation of social stratification. In the Rigveda, in the Brahmanas and even in the Upanishads the fourfold social division is regarded as the creation of a divine being.[1] The Gita also enunciates such a view. Buddha, by repudiating a theological Godhead, offers an explanation of the origin of the four castes in terms of occupations and functions. This type of explanation in terms of functional occupation neutralises any ascription of mythical and divine elements to any particular social caste. Therefore it is clear that the naturalistic cosmology of Buddhism is vastly important for the explanation of social stratification in terms of functions, and of political organizations in terms of the election of the "Great Elect" by collective consensus.

3. *KAUTILYA'S THEORY OF KINGSHIP AND THE PHILOSOPHY AND SOCIOLOGY OF KARMA*

Kautilya has a classic passage on the theory of the elective origin or "creation" of kingship. He says: "People suffering from anarchy, as illustrated by the proverbial tendency of a large fish swallowing a small one, first, elected Manu, the Vaivasvata, to be their king, and allotted one-sixth of the grains grown and one-tenth of the merchandise as royal dues. Fed by this payment, kings took upon themselves the responsibility of maintaining the safety and security of the subjects, and of being answerable for the sins of their subjects when the principle of levying just punishments and taxes has been violated. Hence hermits, too, provide the king with one-sixth of the grains gleaned by them, thinking that "it is a tax payable to him who protects us".[2]

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1. R. V., x. 90 ; Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, i, 4, 11-13.
2. Arthasastra, i, 13, p. 24.

There is frequent reference to the "law of the fishes" in Hindu political works. It is referred to in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Manusmriti, the Kamandakaniti, and the Matsyapurana.[1] A late medieval writer, Raghunatha, also refers to it.[2] It is mentioned not only in the critical and literary works but also in political inscriptions. Gopal, the founder of the Pala dynasty in the ninth century A.D., is referred to as having rescued the people from the condition of the "law of fishes."[3] In the Sanskrit language, the "law of fishes" is a metaphorical way of describing the condition of anarchy. Just as the bigger fish swallows the smaller, so also, in the absence of organized political coercion, the stronger and more powerful individuals and groups lay hands on and grab the weaker ones. The "law of the fishes" symbolizes the sheer prevalence of the cult of naked and unashamed force. In a word, the law of fishes stands for the rule of irrational beasts.[4]

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[1] Law, *op. cit.*, p. 144n. see also Vatsyayana's Kamasutra ;

नाराजके जनपदे स्वकं भवति कस्यचित् ।
मत्स्या इव जना नित्यं भक्षयन्ति परस्परम् ॥

—Ramayana, Ayodhya Kanda, lxvii, 31

यदि न प्रणयेद्राजा दण्डं दण्ड्येस्वतन्द्रितः ।
शूले मत्स्यानिवाभक्ष्यन्दुर्बलान्बलवत्तराः ॥ —Manusmriti, vii, 20.

परस्परामिषतया जगतो भिन्नवर्त्मनः ।
दण्डाभावे परिध्वंसी मात्स्यो न्यायः प्रवर्तते ।

—Kamandakiyanitisara, ii, 41.

[2] Benoy Kumar Sarkar, *Creative India* (Lahore, 1939). The name of Raghunath's book is लौकिकन्यायसंग्रहा Raghunath quotes the following verse :

एतावताऽथ कालेन तद्रसातलमण्डलं ।
बभूवाराजकं तीक्ष्णं मात्स्यन्यायकदर्भितम ॥

[3] Khalimpur Grant of Dharmapal, *Epigraphica Indica*, Vol. iv, p. 248.

[4] Compare a statement about the law of the fishes in western thought : commenting upon the state of nature as described in Hobbes' *The Citizen*, xiii, 37, Pufendorf says : "This is very much like the state of fishes as described by Oppian, *On Fishing*, Bk. II (44 ff.) : 'For they all swim about hostile and savage to one another, for the stronger ever feeds upon the weaker : each darts at the other, intent upon his death, one furnishes food for another.' And again : 'The others live in a state of mutual hostility. Therefore, you will never see fish asleep, rather are their eyes and ears always alert and wakeful, since they always fear the approach of a stronger and set upon the weaker." Samuel von Pufendorf, *The Law of Nature and Nations*, translated by C. H. and W. A. Oldfather (Oxford, 1934), p. 165.

According to Hindu theorists, and here Kautilya is at one with them, only Rajadanda, the legally established coercive power of the king, is the guarantee against the resurgence of anarchy symbolized by the law of fishes. "But when the law of punishment is kept in abeyance, it gives rise to such disorders as is implied in the proverb of fishes, for in the absence of the king, the strong will swallow the weak, but under his protection the weak resist the strong. This people, consisting of four castes and four orders of religious life, when governed by the king with his sceptre, will keep to their respective paths, ever devotedly adhering to their respective duties and occupations."[1] Perhaps this view reflects Kautilya's extreme intellectualism. It is surprising that such a great theoretician, who also had enought political experience in managing the vast Mauryan Empire as its prime minister, should ignore factors like family, or community sentiments and other socializing drives and impulses as deterrents against the dreaded anarchic condition. Possibly, Kautilya's bitter experiences in the war of liberation against the foreigner Seleukos and the Nandas at home, made him over-emphasize the the role of force as the only factor maintaining the social bond. "Danda and Danda alone protects this world and the next" says Kautilya.[2] This polar opposition—either "law of the fishes" or Rajadanda—may be the intellectual device used by the great monarchist to uphold the absolute power of the king and obedience to that power.[3] In his political speculations the king obtains the predominant focus.[4] The king is the pivot of the social and political organization and in him is concentrated the final power of making decisions. Kautilya also demostrates his monarchical orientation by emphasizing the need of conquest and aggrandizement of wealth and territory. He controverts the view of Bharadvaja who had held that ministerial distress is more important than the distress of the king. According to Kautilya the king is the more significant category because he appoints the ministers, priests and other office-holders including the superintendents of the different departments. It is the king who can adopt measures to counter-act troubles of the people and the kingdom and he is responsible for the prosperity of the commonwealth (पुरुषद्रव्यप्रकृतिव्यसनप्रतीकारमेधनं च राजैव करोति). The king provides honours to those who are worthy and suppresses the wicked. He, if prosperous, can extend the prosperity and welfare of the people. His character and personality mould, in a sense, the character and personality of the people. On the other hand, as Kautilyā could have, on the basis of his assumptions about the original king being created by the subjects, he does not specify any legal or political rights of the people which would prevent the growth of despotism.

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[1] Arthasastra, i, 4, 9.

[2] Arthasatra, iii, 1.

[3] Cf. Masson-Oursel, Grabowska etc., *op. cit.*, pp. 96-97 : "The wish to do good and to make Artha concide with Dharma—that is what has become the meaning of politics in the inscriptions of Asoka. From this the classical Sastra had retained to counterbalance its "Machiavelianism", the very definite conviction that the justification of power is the good of the community. But from the great kings who had to use force and cunning to break the feudal lords it got the tendency to fuse policy with the right of punishing. In sharp contrast to the idealism of the Rajadharma there is the realism of Dandaniti, the art of punishment. The founder of the Maurya dynasty...knew from experience that a strong power is established only by violence and maintained only by energy and elasticity...These teachings of experience, once they are condified, produce the theory that fear of punishment is the foundation of legal order, and that the king, the supreme judge, is by his nature exempt from every possibility of punishment."

[4] स्वामी च संपन्न स्वसंपद्भिः प्रकृतीः संपादयति । स्वयं यच्छीलस्तच्छीलाः

By stating that Manu Vaivaswata was the first king, Kautilya lines himself up with the Brahmanical tradition. This tradition was also attributed later on to Bhisma in the Mahabharata. Kautilya refers to the king's wages. In the Buddhist view, one-sixth of the produce of the paddy is considered to be the king's share for establishing order in society. Moreover, the idea of protection is mentioned here. The idea that kingship has been instituted for protection is one of the cardinal tenets of Hindu political philosophy. Again and again it is referred to in Manu, in the Mahabharata and in Sukra.[1] This idea may have its genesis in the mythical accounts in the Aitareya

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प्रकृतयो भवन्ति । उत्थाने प्रमादे च तदायत्तत्वात् । तत्कूटस्थानीयो हि स्वामीति ।

—Arthasastra, viii, 1.

[1] पुत्रा इव पितुर्गेहे विषये यस्य मानवाः ।
निर्भया विचरिष्यन्ति स राजा राजसत्तमः ।। —MBH. xii, 57, 33.
तद्राजन् राजसिंहानां नान्यो धर्मः सनातनः ।
ऋते रक्षां सुविस्पष्टां रक्षा लोकस्य धारणम् ।। *Ibid.*, 42.

Brahmana where kingship is said to originate in the dire need of the Devas who had been attacked by the Asuras. But in spite of the emphasis on the need of protection, Kautilya cannot be considered an individualist. The initial acceptance of the idea of four castes into which people are divided amounts to the acceptance of a non-mechanical social structure. Kautilya does refer to the growth of the physical force of the stronger over the weaker, in the state of anarchy, but when he specifies the unit which is to receive royal protection he refers not to individuals as such, but to the people organized in four castes and four orders. Kautilya defends the power of the king not for individual protection but for the protection of caste groups. The rational necessity of protection originates not in individual self-preservation but in the maintenance of the social structure. The basic unit in the consideration of political problems is not the atomistic individual acting rationally with reference to the maximization of his self-interest. The cardinal concept of Hindu social and political thought is not the self-sufficing isolated individual but the social structure ideally conceived as divided into four varnas. Hence the social structure according to the Hindu writers is not a mechanical agglomeration but is an organic community solidified by the principle of social interdependence as expressed in the theory of swadharma. According to Kautilya the Loka or the people arranged in four varnas and four Ashramas is the supreme social category and not the individual propelled by the mechanics of competitive self-interest.

From the principle that power is justified in terms of protection Kautilya draws certain important conclusions for the political conduct of a king. First, he emphasizes that a disciplined king should be devoted to the good of all living beings.[1] This notion is one of the most important principles of Hindu ethics. Hindu writers consider the moral principle of pity and compassion to be applicable not only to human beings but to all living beings. The Upanishads and the Gita, the Puranas and the

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[1] Arthasastra, i, 5.

Buddhist scriptures do contain a universalistic ethical philosophy.[1] The classic notion of their ethics is the doctrine of universal Ahimsa—non-violence. Although Kautilya upholds aggrandisement of royal power, he accepts the basic principle of Hindu ethics that strength and power are to be used for the protection of the weak. Hindu writers do no speak in terms of the greatest good of the greatest number of human beings but in terms of the good of the universal living beings. This broad notion of the universal applicability of ethical principles imparts a deep moral character to Hindu thought.[2] Second, Kautilya states that royal power is to be exercised not through arbitrary decrees and edicts but by the principles formulated in accordance with Dharma. He has a high respect for the canons of truth and justice and in spite of his recognition of royal commands as the fundamental source for the settlement of legal disputes, he always upholds Dharma which is founded upon truth.

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[1] It has often been maintained by Christian critics trained in Hegelian idealism that the Vedanta and system of thought influenced by the Vedanta are destructive of all ethical values. If the supreme reality of an ideal principle—existence-gnosis-bliss-stuff, is maintained, then ethical distinctions become relegated either to nullity or to subordinate sphere. Ethics is based on a dualistic metaphysics and hence the Vedanta is careless about subjective freedom and social and historical objectives. But against this view we can refer to the Upanishadic metaphysics according to which a person possessed of the highest realization should comprehend all living beings as manifestations of his own self which in essence is the ultimate reality.

यस्तु सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मन्येवानुपश्यति ।
सर्वभूतेषु चात्मानं ततो न विजुगुप्सते ।।
यस्मिन् सर्वाणि भूतान्यात्मैवाभूद्विजानत : ।
तत्र को मोहः कः शोकः एकत्वमनुपश्यत : ।।
—V. S. XL, 6, 7.

This type of spiritual identity is comparable to the Kantian maxim 'every action is right which in itself or in the maxim on which it proceeds is such that it can co-exist with the freedom of the will of each and all in action, according to a universal law.' (*Philosophy of Law*, Introduction, § C. p. 45). In Croce and Bradley also we find a similar attempt to base an ethical system on spiritual idealism.

Buddhist ethical universalism is found in the Jatakas, in the conception of the eight-fold path and in the doctrine of the Paramitas of later schools.

[2] Cf. Ramayana, Ayodhya Kanda, lviii, 32-33 :

सर्वलोकप्रियं त्यक्त्वा सर्वलोकहिते रते ।
सर्वलोकोऽनुरज्येत कथं चानेन कर्मणा ।।
सर्वप्रजाभिरामं हि रामं प्रव्राज्य धार्मिकम् ।
सर्वलोकविरोधेन कथं राजा भविष्यति ।।

The third fundamental political principle of Kautilya is the doctrine of political paternalism and enlightened royal idealism. This paternalism is not to be conceived in terms of the arbitrary power of interference of the king in the social life of the people but as a factor constituting the philosophical ideals of kingship. Kautilya [Arthasastra, vi, 1] gives a comprehensive list of the categories and qualities which constitute the ideals of a king :—

(A) *Qualities of an inviting nature* (आभिगामिका गुणाः): of high birth, pious, possessed of fine intellect, in consultation with aged persons, moral (धार्मिक), truthful, not of a divided nature (अविसंवादकः), grateful, having lofty ideals, highly enthusiastic, not given to procrastination, powerful to control the neighouring kings (शक्यसामन्त), of firm mind, having a large assembly (अक्षुद्रपरिषत्क), and having a propensity for discipline and restraint(विनयकाम).

(B) *Qualities of intellect and intuition* (प्रज्ञागुणाः) ;— Devotedness (शुश्रूषा), hearing, reception, retention, discriminate vision, critical analysis, penetration into the regions of metaphysics (तत्त्वाभिनिवेश).

(C) *Qualities of enthusiasm* (उत्साहगुणाः) —prowess, non-endurance (अमर्ष), quickness and dexterity (दाक्ष्य).

(D) *Qualities of selfr-estraint and spirit* (आत्मसंपत्) :— Eloquence, self-pride, of keen mind, energetic, powerful (स्मृतिमतिबलवानुदग्रः स्ववग्रहः), trained in the arts, free from vice, capable of paying in the same coin by means of awarding rewards and penal sanctions (दण्ड नाद्युपकारापकारयोर्दृष्टप्रतीकारी), possessed of dignity, capable of taking counter-measures against dangers, having foresight, ready to avail himself of opportunities when afforded in respect of place, time and efforts, clever enough to discern the causes necesitating the cessation of treaty or war with an enemy or to wait maintaining treaties, obligations and pledges, or to take advantage of the enemy's weak points, making jokes with no loss of secrecy or dignity, never brow-beating and casting arrogant looks, free from lust, anger, covetousness, obstinacy, fickleness, haste and back-biting habits, talking to others with a smiling face and adhering to the customs as interpreted by the aged persons(वृद्धदेशोपचार). [Of several terms I have given an interpretation different from that of Shamashastry]. The same intimate and deep bond of affection which characterizes filial relationships is to be maintained in the political life of the king and the people. This idea supplements the usual notion of kingship being characterized by coercion and subordination of the people. Thus, according to Kautilya, the king was not to be a despot exercising power through sheer military force but was to rule his subjects through affection.[1] If the king would be of unregenerate and wicked character and would not be properly disciplined, then in spite of his being a powerful potentate ruling the four quarters, he would succumb to the fury of the people or would fall a victim to the enemies. (हन्यते वा प्रकृतिभिर्याति वा द्विषतां वशम). Kautilya puts great emphasis on the devotion and loyalty of the subjects. He raises the question as to which enemy is to be attacked—a powerful enemy of wicked disposition or a weak enemy of righteous and noble character. Kautilya's settled conviction is that the strong enemy of wicked character should be marched against because in case of external invasion the disgruntled subjects will suppress the king or turn over to the side of the conqueror. But if the weak enemy devoted to the concept of justice (दुर्बलं तु न्यायवृत्तिम्) is attacked then his subjects help him and if necessary die with him. Hence according to Kautilya it is essential to cultivate the affections and loyal devotedness of the people. He categorizes three kinds of subject population—impoverished (क्षीण) ; greedy (लुब्ध) and disaffected (विरक्त). An impoverished and exploited people are apprehensive of oppression and hence seek to get rid of their plight either by waging war or migrating to some other place. A greedy people are discontented because of their acquisitiveness and hence are liable to be influenced by the intrigues of the enemy. A disaffected people rise against the king along with his enemy. Hence the conclusion of Kautilya is that no king should ever generate poverty, acquisitive greediness and disaffection among the people.

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[1] This basic political principle also had empirical financial consequences. According to the Arthasastra v. 2, the taxation policy must be regulated in line with the moral contained in the following comparison—the king should pluck the mature fruits from his kingdom and not the unripe fruits because they cause resentment.

पक्वं पक्वमिवारामात् फलं राज्यादवाप्नुयात् ।
आमच्छेदभयादामं वर्जयेत् कोपकारकम् ॥

Commenting upon the financial policy of Kautily and Manu, U.N. Ghoshal, *Contributions to the History of the Hindu Revenue System* (Calcutta, 1929), p. 20, states : "the broad fact is recognised that the state revenues ultimately depend upon the production of wealth by individuals, and that whatever tends to diminish the latter is bound to react upon the former. Again, it is recognised that while taxation subserves the essential needs of the king or the state, it involves a diminution of the people's wealth. Hence the task of the statesmen is to reconcile the needs of the State with the interests of the subjects." According to the Manusmriti also a policy of moderation has to be followed. "After due consideration the king shall always fix in his realm the duties and taxes in such a manner that both he himself and the man who does the work receive their due reward. As the leech, the calf and the bee take their food little by little even so must the king draw from his realm moderate annual taxes" (vii, 128-129).

From these basic principles of political action are derived some important criteria for the exercise of political power on the administrative levels. The highest administrative officers are to be tested by "temptations" and only when they have proved themselves "pure", are they to be retained in office.[1] There are four criteria of purity. The first is the non-inclination to subvert the established regime of the king. The second is the refusal to be captivated by monetary allurements. The third is the refusal to be terrorized under critical situations. The fourth is self-control under sexual provocations. The purity or impurity of administrative officers is to be tested by spies. Besides the capacity to restrain oneself from being deviated from the path of duty under these temptations, another requirement for the administrator is the capacity to perform his duty "for a man's ability is inferred from his capacity shown in work." On this issue there had been a long controversy among the previous thinkers. According to Pisuna, only those who on being appointed as financial officers, show as much as or more than the fixed revenue are to be retained. Kaunapadanta did not deem this to be a requisite ministerial qualification and proposed a hereditary aristocracy of ministers. Only those persons whose fathers and grandfathers had been ministers were to be appointed as ministers since they would be loyal to the king. Vatavyadhi was an advocate of the infusion of new blood. He held that the opinion of Kaunapadanta was unrealistic because a minister descended from a long line of ministers would dominate the king and so he proposed that only those new persons who have demonstrated their abilities in the "science of policy" are to be appointed as ministers. These would not oppose the king. Bahudantiputra refuted this theory of new recruitment from the experts: "...for a man possessed of only theoretical knowledge, and having no experience of practical politics, is likely to commit serious blunders when engaged in actual works. Hence he shall employ as ministers such as are born of high family and possessed of wisdom, purity of purpose, bravery and loyal feelings, inasmuch as ministerial appointments shall purely depend on qualifications."[1] Kautilya accepted the view of Bahudantiputra.

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[1] Arthasastra, 1, 10.

In the passage quoted earlier concerning the creation of the first king, occurs another idea derived from the philosophy of Karma. Kautilya stated that if the king is not faithful to his duty of protection and exacts dues without preserving social order he takes on the evil deeds of the subjects. This idea had been taken by Kautilya from the traditional body of wisdom. This notion that the king gets a portion of the evil deeds of the subjects if he fails in his duty, and acquires a portion of their good deeds if he faithfully discharges his functions, is found in the Arthasastra, the Mahabharata, and the Manusmriti. Since this notion is so universally accepted by Hindu political writers and is linked up with the general psychology and philosophy of Karma, we feel justified in digressing a little bit and explaining the philosophy of Karma itself.

Karma is a Sanskrit word meaning action—whether mental, physical, or vocal. The philosophy of Karma accepts the determination of the life of a man by the past deeds performed by him and the psychological and cosmic influences and impressions generated by the transmission of the moral and physical energy in the process of the act.[1] This philosophy comprehends under Karma both the external acts and the inner motivation prompting the performance of thea ct. The doctrine of Karma is found in all the principal systems of Indian thought—Jainism, Buddhism, the Nyaya-Vaisesika, the Mimansa, the Vedanta and others. It is the central doctrine of Hindu ethics. In the Brahmanical tradition the law of Karma operates under a godhead[2] while in Buddhism it is an inexorable law operating independent of any theistic agency. The law of Karma regulates the present status and the future rebirth of an individval. A man's present status is the result of his past deeds. One person is a king and the other a slave because they performed deeds in their past lives leading to kingship or to slavery. Every man is given what he deserves. If he desires any better he should do good deeds. Although the principle of Karma thus amounts to an actionistic determinism, the belief in the autonomy of the self prevents it from degenerating into a philosophy of fatalism.[3] In Hindu thought we do not find the parallel of the Greek concepts of *Moira* (Fate) and Necessity. The Hindu writers do not posit the conception of an ineluctable destiny or a blind primordial cosmic force which somehow uses man as a mere instrument to reduce everything to a vast niril and destruction. In the face of all grim odds and apparently insurmountable difficulties the belief in Karma tends to give a great solace. It teaches the eventual spiritual conservation of all actions. Thus it provides an antidote to despair and constantly impels a man to action. Instead of a quietist gospel of resignation the theory of Karma teaches energetic application to action because it teaches that nothing good fails to bring foward its inevitable consequence. It is postulated upon a moral and teleological view of the world. The Sukraniti says: "Men who are wise and whose character deserves praise, greatly respect Paurusa or individual energy ; whereas the weaklings who are unable to exercise energy, to exert themselves, worship Daiva or Fate." Perhaps the following verse from the Pali literature would give an idea about the law of Karma:

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[1] Arthasastra, i, 8, p. 14.

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[1] A very "materialistic" concept of Karma is found in the Jaina philosophy where human mental, vocal and bodily actions produce subtle Karma matter which is transformed from भावकर्म to द्रव्यकर्म and in the latter shape sticks to the soul.

[2] फलमत उपपत्तेः। श्रुतत्वाच्च । Vedantasutra iii, 2, 38,39; Kaushitaki U. 3. 8 ; B. G. vii, 22 ; Commenting upon Vedantasutra ii, 1. 34. 35, Samkara says : "स्मृतिरपि प्राणिकर्मविशेषापेक्षमेवेश्वरस्यानुग्रहीतृत्वं निग्रहीतृत्वं च दर्शयति—ये यथा मां प्रपद्यन्ते तांस्तथैव भजाम्यहम् (B. G. iv, 11)........... अतो विभागादूर्ध्वं कर्मापेक्ष ईश्वरः प्रवर्ततां नाम । "

Buddhism emphasises सम्यक् कर्मान्त, सम्यक् आजीव and सम्यक्व्यायाम. In the Anguttaranikaya, iii, 2, Karma is said to be nothing but चेतना.

[3] Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, *op. cit.*, 1. 246, 441 ; Sri Aurobindo, *The Life Divine*, II, 628-630.
Cf.,—

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥
बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जितः ।
अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्तेतात्मैव शत्रुवत् ॥

—B. G. vi, 5-6.

His good deeds and his wickedness,
What e'er a mortal does while here ;
'Tis this that he can call his own,
This with him take as he goes hence.
This is what follows after him,
And like a shadow ne'er departs.
Let all men noble deeds perform,
A treasure-store for future weal ;
For merit gained this life within,
Will yield a blessing in the next.[1]

The fundamental importance of Karma is thus apparent. According to the Upanishads a man speaks what he thinks, does what he speaks and becomes what he does. The great importance of Karma has been always accepted either explicitly or implicitly by all the writers on political thought. Hence it is no wonder that we find Kautilya, Bhisma, Manu and Sukra adhering to it. According to Sukra the propensity to virtue and vice and the intellectual orientation are determined by Karma. Sukra accepts the operative efficacy of Karmic determinism and individual efforts in the occurrence of events.

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[1] Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (Cambridge, Mass., 1915), p. 214 ; Majjhima Nikaya (Samaditthisutta).

We are not concerned here with the whole philosophy of Karma, but only with the notion of the transfer of the evil deeds of the subjects to the king in case he fails in the performance of his duties. The notion of the transfer of sin is found in the Rigveda and the Atharvaveda as well as in the Brahmanas. The intellectual tendency to broaden the operation of the law of Karma is found in the Upanishads. According to the Kausitaki and the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad the son takes over the actions of the father. The Mahabharata and the Manusmriti accept the view that the Karma of the fore-fathers affects the descendants. The Kausitaki Upanishad contains the idea that the man who attains the realization of the absolute, after passing by the river of immortality, casts away his evil and good deeds, which his friends and enemies duly share, while he from his exalted position looks in a detached fashion at the good and evil deeds.[1] Thus it is apparent that the idea of transfer of good and evil deeds is found both in the pre-Kautilyan and post-Kautilyan literature. According to the Manusmriti the Kshatriya who is slain in battle, while he turns back in fear takes upon himself all the sins of his master and whatever merit a man who is slain in battle may have acquired for the world beyond, all that his master takes. The Arthasastra shows that a notion, which had been predominantly theological and ethical so far, can be politically interpreted. It stresses by implication the moral duty of the king towards his subjects. It appeals to super-terrestrial sanctions.[2] If the king would not perform his duties efficiently and properly, he will have to pay the penalty for the evil deeds of the subjects. Hence what the king should do is to be devoted to his primary duty of protection of the subjects.

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[1] Kausitaki Upanishad, i, 4 ; Brihadaranyaka Upanishad, i, 5, Cf. the Santiparva, xlc, 17 :

प्रभुर्नियमने राजा य एतान्न नियच्छति ।
भुङ्क्ते स तस्य पापस्य चतुर्भागमिति श्रुतिः ।
तथा कृतस्य धर्मस्य चतुर्भागमुपाश्नुते ॥

[2] Although Bentham uses the term sanctions to include both pleasure and pain, the Austinians confine the term only to pain. The concept of Karma implies that a man would enjoy pleasure or pain, after death, in accordance with the nature of the deeds performed by him.

The concept of protection (पालन) according to Kautilya was very comprehensive. It signified not the mere utilitarian idea of self-preservation from the outbursts of unforeseen violence and external aggression but also approximated to the ideal of social and economic justice in its concern for the well-being and happiness of the orphan, the aged, the widow, the sick and the poor (बालवृद्धव्याधितव्यसन्यनाथांश्च राजा बिभृयात् । स्त्रियमप्रजातां प्रजातायाश्च पुत्रान्). The king was to take adequate measures to protect industry and agriculture and mining. In dispensing justice, impartiality and fairness was to be upheld. If a capable person other than an apostate or mother (अन्यत्र पतितेभ्यः । अन्यत्र मातुः) neglects to maintain his or her child, wife, mother, father, minor brothers, sisters or widowed girls, he or she was to be punished by the king with a fine of twelve panas. The king was to protect agriculture from the molestation of exorbitant fines, forced labour and taxes. The cattle population was to be protected from the devastations of thieves, tigers, poisonous creatures and cattle-disease. The functions of the king also included conservation and development of timber and elephant forests, buildings and mines. Hence Kautilya thought not in terms of mere power but was supremely concerned with protection, conservasion and justice.

4. *THE THEORY OF KINGSHIP IN THE MAHABHARATA*

The Santiparva of the Mahabharata contains two theories of elective kingship—the one associated with the name of Manu and the other with that of Prithu. Since the Santiparva is not a systematic political work but a collection of political ideas and opinions, it is not surprising to find two different traditions about one problem. Bhisma the narrator of these views in a dialogue form does not seem to be conscious of having proposed contrary or different views. Yudhisthira asks him about the origin of kingship and he gives a mythical account of its origin. The statements with regard to the origin of the first king are mixed with references to the participation of the gods in the actual processes of election. A detailed analysis of the philosophy behind these notions of divine participation will be given in the next chapter. We shall first take up the account of the origin of Manu's kingship.

Before discussing the conditions under which Manu became the first king Bhisma described the horrors associated with the kingless state or the condition of anarchy symbolized by the "law of fishes."[1] In kingdoms where anarchy prevails the sacrificial cult ceases to function and enjoyment of life is not possible. During times of anarchy, the wicked man robs the wealth of other people and indulges in comforts and pleasure. But he wants to have a king when his ill-gotten wealth is snatched away by others. In the anarchical period the enslavement of free people and the destruction of the sanctity of family life is common.[2] The condition of anarchy is best typified by the "law of fishes". Bhisma refers to the tradition that in the olden days people lived in a state of terrible destruction and oppression "devouring one another," like the fishes.[3] To get rid of this terrible state a few amongst them assembled together and made certain compacts. —Samaya—saying: "He who becomes harsh in speech, or violent in temper, he who seduces or abducts other people's wives or robs the wealth that belongs to others, should be cast off by us. For inspiring confidence among all classes of the people, they made such a compact and lived for some time."[1] But these compacts to punish the destroyers of social peace and discipline evidently proved inadequate and hence they (possibly the few chosen leaders) proceeded to the God of creation and implored him to appoint some one as king.[2] Thus solicited, Brahma—the God of creation—asked Manu to become the king. Manu did not assent to the proposal and said : "I fear all sinful acts. To govern a kingdom is exceedingly difficult, especially among men who are always false and deceitful in their behaviour."[3]

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[1] Santiparnva, lxvii.

[2] Santiparva, lxvii.

[3] Summarizing the concrete specifications of the anarchical state according to the Mahabharata, Benoy Sarkar writes: "The non-state is then a state of anarchy, one in which the tyranny of robbers has full play, justice is non-existent and the people prey upon one other. It is the greatest evil. Enjoyment of wealth is impossible under it. Only the robber is then happy. Even his happiness is precarious, because the one is deprived of his loot by two, the two are robbed of theirs by several combined. A free man is made a slave... It is thus with the negation of morals and manners, the nullification of property, the very antithesis of law and justice that the non-state is identified. And this appears to have been the fundamental position of Hindu theorists on the state." (P. 197, *Institutions and Theories*). But Sarkar has minimised the significance of the other account in the Mahabharata, Santiparva, chap. 59, where even when there was no king or kingdom, there was the prevalence of Dharma.

But the inhabitants of the earth or the subjects satisfied his objections and said to him : "Do not fear ! The sins that men commit will touch those only that commit them. For the increase of thy treasury we will give thee a fiftieth part of our animals and precious metals and a tenth part of our grain... Those amongst men who will become the foremost of all in the use of weapons and in riding animals and other vehicles, shall proceed behind thee like the deities behind Indra. With the strength enhanced in this way, and becoming invincible and possessed of great prowess, thou wilt be our king and protect us happily....A fourth part of the merit which men will earn under thy protection will be thine. Like the sun scorching everything with his rays, go out for winning victories. Crush the pride of foes and let righteousness always triumph."[1] Being thus assured Manu proceeded, accompanied by a large force. Beholding the might and prowess of Manu the subjects were struck with fear and devoted themselves to the performance of their specific functions. Manu toured the world and supressed all acts of wickedness and set people to their respective duties.[2] From this account of the origin of the first king, after a period of anarchy, Bhisma draws the conclusion that people desirous of mundane prosperity should elect and crown a king for the protection of all. It is very difficult to ascertain whether he believed in the historical veracity of the account of the origin of kingship given by him or was only constructing a hypothetical picture to substantiate his great stress on the necessity of a king for the well-being of society.

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[1] *Ibid.*, lxciii, 18-19.

[2] For a kindred conception in Motze, a 4th cent. B. C. Chinese thinker, Liang Chi-chao, *History of Chinese Political Thought* (London, 1930), pp. 105-106 : "In the days of old when there was no government every man observed his own standard. As every man's standard was different, two men had two standards and ten men ten standards, the more the people, the more the standards that existed. Every man justified his own standard and despised that of the other man, so that there resulted relationships of mutual despising. In the homes, disagreement existed between father and son, between brother and brother. In the market, people were to one another as water and fire, hating one another like poison, so that spare energy could not be used for mutual help. They held it better that surplus wealth should rot than be used for the common good. Knowledge that was gained was hidden and concealed, no exchange of experience was possible. Chaos was the order of the day ; man lived together like beasts." (*Practising Equality*, i). "Finally it was realised that until there was a leader to unify the standards of men, chaos must be a natural sequence. Therefore, the man who combined in himself goodness, wisdom, and sagacity was made emperor to bring uniformity out of the many standards. When the emperor was enthroned it was felt that, since as power of one man's eyes and ears is limited, he alone could not bring uniformity. Therefore, men who possessed goodness, wisdom, and sagacity, in a lesser degree, were chosen to be high ministers of state to assist the emperor in his task". (*Ibid.*, ii).

[3] *Ibid.*, 22.

Bhisma stresses the fact that people feel the great need of a king to save themselves from destruction. The horrors of the "law of fishes" are not mitigated by the compacts they had made amongst themselves. Manu the first king is not an ordinary individual. He is super-human and is like the gods in his might and prowess.[3] Althought he fixes the terms and conditions of rulership with the people he is the nominee of the God Brahma. The contractual agreement between the first king and the people which is found in the Buddhist literature and the Arthasastra is mentioned in greater detail here and this

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1. *Ibid.*, 23-29.
2. *Ibid.*, 31.
3. Cf. Sri Aurobindo, *The Ideal Human Unity*, pp. 212-13 ; "In fact, if we examine the profound legendary tradition of India, we see that its idea of the Manu is more a symbol than anything else. His name means man the mental being. He is the divine legislator, the mental demi-god in humanity who fixes the lines upon which the race or people has to govern its evolution. In the Purana he or his sons are said to reign in subtle earths or worlds or, as we say, they reign in the larger mentality which to us is subconscient and from there have power to determine the line of development of the conscious life of man. His law is the Manava-Dharma-Sastra, the science of the law of conduct of the mental or human being and in this sense we may think of the law of any human society as being the conscious evolution of the type and lines which its an Muhas fixed for it."

shows an advance in the conception of the contractual nature of kingship. But here, as elsewhere in Hindu political philosophy, in spite of the references to some sort of bargaining and agreement between the mythical king and people, no systematic attempt is made to make explicit the fact that the rights and power of the king are derived from the people, although the desirability of killing a king who fails in the performance of his duties is conceded. Bhisma also accepts the implication of the transfer of merit, involved in the philosophy of Karma. Kautilya refers to the transfer of the evil deeds of the people to the king if he failed in his duty. The Mahabharatan account contains the notion of the transfer of good deeds of the people to the king if the latter is faithful to his primary duty of protection.

The Mahabharata also contains a different account of the origin of the first king. Yudhisthira asks Bhisma the question of the necessity and justification of political obedience. "Possessed of hands and arms and neck like others, having an understanding and senses like those of others, subject like others to the same kinds of joy and grief...resembling others in birth and death, in fact, similar to others in respect of all the attributes of humanity, for what reason does one man, *viz.*, the king, govern the rest of the world numbering many men possessed of great intelligence and bravery? Whence is it that one man rules the wide world teeming with brave and highborn men of good behaviour? Why do all men seek to obtain his favour? Why is it that if one man becomes delighted, the whole world becomes delighted, and if that one man is troubled, the whole world becomes troubled.[1]" Bhisma, thus being questioned, narrates to him the origin of kingship.

In the golden age—the Kritayuga—there was no necessity of any king or kingdom or coercion. There was neither any system of punishment nor anybody to wield the sceptre of punishment. The subjects protected each other by Dharma. Protected by Dharma they lived for a long time but then the disintegrating factors began to appear.[2] The disintegration was due to the appearance of anti-social psychological factors. Bhisma constructs a logically connected picture of how one disintegrating drive led to another. The people were caught by Moha—delusion and error. "Having become subject to error, the perceptions of men, O prince, came to be clouded, and thence their virtue began to decline. When their perceptions were dimmed and when men became subject to error, all of them became covetous, O chief of the Bharatas! And because men sought to obtain objects which they did not possess, another passion called lust (of acquisition), got hold of them. When they became subject to lust, another passion, named wrath soon soiled them. Once subject to wrath, they lost all consideration of what should be done and what should not. Unrestrained sexual indulgence set in. Men began to utter what they chose. All distinctions between food that is clean and unclean and between virtue and vice disappeared. Upon the disappearance of the Vedas, righteousness was lost. When both Vedas and righteousness were lost, the gods were possessed by fear."[1] The decline of the original Dharma is thus due to four factors, delusion, greed, lust and attachment. This psychological theory of social disorganization and decline has been greatly influenced by the Samkhyan theory of cosmic and individual development. The Mahabharata is silent about the all-pervasive factor of ignorance or cosmic negativity which occupies such a great importance in the Vedantic thought.[2]

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[1] Santiparva, Lix, 6-10.
[2] *Ibid*, 14-15.

All these psychological drives mentioned by the Mahabharata—delusion, greed, lust and attachment—are only detailed specifications of what the writers on Samkhya philosophy call Ahamakara or egoistic self-feeling.[3] Ahamkara is the principle of individuation and it imparts a sense of separate selfhood to the various selves. We are here concerned only with the psychological and not the cosmic aspect of Ahamkara. The function of Ahamkara is to generate the feeling of self-assertiveness in the self or Purusa. It leads to the subjective selection of the impressions that come from the external world. This principle of self-assertiveness, self-distinction and individuating self-love leads to the captivity of the luminous soul in the clutches of nature by perverting its purity through the generation of the seeds of attachment.[1] This notion of Ahamkara is borrowed by the later Vedantic writers and given a place in their scheme of psychology.[2] It is highly interesting to find that in explaining the origin and justification of kingship, Bhisma should use the Samkhya psychology. So far, the Hindu psychologists and metaphysicians had used the principles of the Samkhya only for explaining the genesis of the cosmos and the nature of suffering in the world. Bhisma is the first writer to use the Samkhya psychology in a political context. Even the Bhagavadgita which formulates a scheme of the spiritual destruction of man caused by lust,[3] very similar to the views of Bhisma, both being derived ultimately from the Samkhya, does not attempt any political use of that scheme.

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[1] *Ibid.*, 16-22.

[2] According to Deussen the metaphysics of the Mahabharata marks the transition from the Vedantic spiritualistic idealism to the realism of the Samkhya.

[3] For Samkhya ideas in the Mahabharata, see Joseph Dahlmann, *Die Samkhya-Philosophie* (Berlin, 1920).

Having analysed the destruction of the pre-political condition in terms of Samkhya psychology, Bhisma attempts to describe the institution of kingship. Because the Vedas and Dharma had been destroyed among men, the gods were afflicted with fear and they approached Brahma—the God of creation—and solicited his advice. The God Brahma composed a big treatise describing the four ends of mankind. Having composed the treatise he said to the deities: "I have composed this science representing the very cheese of speech. Assisted by chastisement, this science will protect the world. Dealing rewards and punishments, this science will operate among men. And because men are led (to the acquisition of the objects of their existence) by chastisement, or, in other words, chastisement leads or governs everything, therefore, will this science be known in the three worlds as Dandaniti (science of chastisement).[1]

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[1] अभिमानोऽहङ्कारः, तस्माद् द्विविधः प्रवर्तते सर्गः ।
एकादशकश्च गणः, तन्मात्रपञ्चकश्चैव ॥
सात्त्विक एकादशकः प्रवर्तते वैकृतादहङ्काराद् ।
भूतादेस्तन्मात्रः, स तामसस्तैजसादुभयम् ॥

—Samkhya Karika 24, 25.

[2] According to the Vedantaparihasa, the Antahkarana has four aspects: (i) Manas, (ii) Buddhi, (iii) Ahamkara and (iv) Citta. Ahamkara has reference to the feeling of egoistic self-subsistence. The Vedantasara comprehends Ahamkara under Manas.

[3] B. G., ii, 62-63.

The gods then approached Vishnu—the God of preservation—and requested him to indicate "that one among mortals who deserves to have superiority over the rest."[2] Vishnu created by his will a son born of his energy, named Virajas. The latter did not desire lordship over people but was devoted to contemplation. His son and grandson and great-grandson also devoted themselves to renunciation and austerity. His great-great-grandson became a protector of creatures and was very pious in his behaviour. The latter had a son well versed in policy, who became a slave to his passions. The latter's son was called Vena. Vena was a slave of wrath and malice and became unrighteous in his conduct towards all creatures and hence the seers and the sages killed him. From the right arm of Vena sprang his son, Prithu. The slaughter of Vena was regarded by theorists like Manu as the classic example of regicide because of the king's indiscipline.

King Prithu asked the gods and the sages as to what he was to do. The gods and the sages directed him as follows: "Do thou fearlessly accomplish all those tasks in which righteousness ever resides. Disregarding what is dear and what not so, look upon all creatures with an equal eye. Cast off at a distance, lust and wrath and covetousness and honour, and, always observing the dictates of righteousness, do thou punish with they own hands the man, whoever he may be, that deviates from the path of duty. Do thou also swear that thou wouldst, in thought, word and deed, always maintain the religion inculcated on Earth by the Vedas. Do thou further swear that thou wouldst fearlessly maintain the duties laid down in the Vedas with the aid of the

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1. Santiparva, Lix, 75-78.
2. *Ibid.*, 87.

science of chastisement, and that thou wouldst never act with caprice...pledge further that thou wouldst protect the world from an intermixture of castes."[1]

This oath which king Prithu had to take is remarkable in several respects. Prithu promises to maintain law and order, protect the people and never be arbitrary. He is to punish not everybody, but only the wrong-doers. His social functions are shown by the promise to protect the people from intermixture of castes. He promises special reverence for the Brahmins. After this oath was taken the deities, the sages, the regents of the quarters and Vishnu himself crowned Prithu as the king of the world. Prithu was called Rajan because he gratified all the people. He carried the name of Kshatriya because he healed the wounds of Brahmins. The God Vishnu entered the body of Prithu in consequence of his penances and therefore the entire universe offered divine worship to Prithu.[2]

5. *THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS*

Thus far we have analyzed four different accounts of the origin of kingship—(1) the origin of kingship amongst the gods to obtain victory against the demons ; (2) the "Great Elect" theory of the Buddhist literature ; (3) Kautilya's theory of the election of Manu ; and (4) the Manu and Prithu traditions in the Mahabharata. In all of these accounts there is a strong mythical element. That this incorporation of a mythical account does not show any political primitivism is clear when we consider the profound philosophical and psychological assumptions of the theorists.

These accounts are not the concrete descriptions of a historical event in the truth of which the writers believed. This does not imply the denial of the historicity of some of the figures referred to in these accounts, especially of Manu and Prithu. This question is controversial. But so much is certain that whether the figures be historical or mythical, they have been used by the theorists not for narrating any actual historical event but to show the logical characteristics of kingship as an institution. Even if there could be some doubt about the logical and non-historical purpose of the others, not a shadow of doubt remains about the Buddhist account. Buddha's main aim is not to present the accurate history of social and political evolution but to show the hollowness of the pretensions to power of the contemporary holders of authority. He is interested not in the objectivity and veracity of the details of history but in the construction of a set of propositions, to establish his naturalistic theory of the origin of social castes against the theory of divine origin of the Varnas as enunciated in the Rigveda.

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[1] *Ibid*, 103-108.
[2] *Ibid*, 128.

One implication of all these theories is the repudiation of any conception of kingship as an eternal institution. Kingship is not prior to other social institutions but arises at a certain historical period to satisfy certain wants of mankind. Both the Buddhist account and the Prithu and Manu traditions of the Mahabharata do assume periods when men lived as social beings but when there was no organized political superior. The primacy of Dharma is apparent in the Prithu account where it is said that people protected each other by Dharma although there was no organized machinery of coercion.

Another important implication of the elective theory of the origin of kingship was the conception of kingly power as a trust. In the Satapatha there are references to specific purposes for which kingship has been instituted.[1] This idea of kingly power being related to function and purposes is repeated in the coronation oath in the Aitareya and the Mahabharata. In the Mahabharata the kingdom is described as a trust in the hands of Yudhisthira.[2] This idea of kingly power or kingdom as a trust is the extension of the idea of "Aparigraha"—non-accumulation of wealth and possessions as enunciated in the Yoga philosophy.[3] The dominance of the moral and spiritual orientation to values and ideals in Hindu thought always implied the

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1. S.B., v, 2, 1, 25; V.S., x, 22.
2. Asramavasika, ix.
3. Commenting upon the Yogasutra ii, 30, conception of Aparigraha,

transitoriness of worldly prosperity. Even those writers who preached the supremacy of power and conquest would advocate the vanity of human ambitions and acqnisitions when they would come to the problem of the foundations and justification of human life. Hence some thinkers even while advocating the extension of territories as a part of the Dharma of the king would ultimately regard this as inferior to the concept of abnegation of wealth and power. It is similar to the metaphysical notion of the agent as propounded in the Gita. According to both the Vedanta and the Samkhya metaphysics, there is a strong emphasis on determinism. In the Vedanta either everything is done by the will of the absolute or from an ultimate standpoint there is no action being done at all. In the Samkhya everything is being done by the operative mechanism of nature and not by the self. The Gita accepts both of these notions and hence man is regarded as a mere agent and not an autonomous actor.[1] Hence even the royal functionaries are not self-propelled persons but are only performing that which has been willed by the divine. If a person as highly regarded in the Hindu tradition as Arjuna, is only an agent for the concrete realization of the supreme will of Godhead, the ordinary mortal kings do not count. This conception of the supremacy of a divine being necessarily implies the insignificance of man and his pride of autonomous actorhood

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Vyasa says : "विषयाणामर्जनरक्षणक्षयसङ्गहिंसादोषदर्शनादस्वीकरणमपरिग्रहः" । Vachaspati makes the following comment on it : "तत्र सङ्गदोषो उक्तो भोगाभ्यासमनुविवर्धन्ते रागाः कौशलानि चेन्द्रियाणामिति । हिंसालक्षणश्च दोषो नानुपहृत्य भूतान्युपभोगः संभवतीति । अशास्त्रीयाणामयत्नोपनतानामपि विषयाणां निन्दितप्रतिग्रहादिरूपार्जनदोषदर्शनाच्छास्त्रीयाणामप्युपार्जितानां च रक्षणादिदोषदर्शनादस्वीकरणमपरिग्रहः ।

[1] The Gita tries to reconsile the absolutistic self-substantive determinism of the Vedanta with the cosmic determinism of the Samkhya by asserting the concept of the two Prakrits.

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ।

In its references to the transcendence of Prakriti and the devotional self-surrender to a supreme Godhead (मामेकं शरणं व्रज) the Gita embarks upon a theological determinism of the type which we find in Hindu and European mysticism and also to some extent in Augustine and Aquinas.

is regarded as a mere agency. Hence this kind of metaphysics would support the attitudes of detachment and disinterestedness towards political power and authority. If the king is a mere agent, then egoistic engrossment in the pursuit of political honour should be replaced by a conscientious adherence to the canons of duty. Thereby the tendency to treat political office as a mere trust would get philosophical and moral reinforcement. This idea of the kingly power being only a deposit or a trust, has been substantiated not only by the political theory of original election and the metaphysical theory of absolutistic or cosmic determinism, but also by concrete historical reference to kings like Janaka and Asvapati who are not devoted to power politics, but concern themselves with the knowledge of the self and eschatology. The Maitrayani Upanishad refers to king Brihadratha who was convinced of the evanascene of worldly phenomena and hence retired to the forest as a recluse after giving the kingdom in charge of his son. Hindu history and mythology contain several examples of the abnegation of political power. For centuries the Hindu mind has been dominated by the illustrious example of Buddha who gave up the rulership of a state for the supreme quest of knowledge. Thus the idea of kingly power as a trust or deposit is one of the fundamental principles of Hindu political philosophy. The coronation oath, both in theory and in practice, was a concrete demonstration of it. But this theory of kingly power as a trust or deposit is not to be confused with the modern conception of the state as a public service association which has been developed by the French solidaristic school of sociology. This conception stresses the increasing significance of the non-coercive public service activities of the state in the control and management of public utilities and in other undertakings which have an orientation to serve collective welfare. The roots of the modern conception of the state as an agency to realize public service lie in the materialistic philosophy of socialism and socio-economic justice while the foundations of the ancient Hindu theory of king's authority as trust lay in the spiritual philosophy of cosmic determinism.

Less pronounced than the principle of power as a trust but also related to the general theory of the election of the first king is the notion of the murder of an unrighteous king. Since protection of the subjects from the evils of anarchy is the basic reason for the institution of the king, hence a king who does not afford protection is to be avoided, "like a leaky boat on the sea."[1] Jayaswal[2] interprets aviodance to mean transfer of allegiance to another king, but the Sanskrit text does not mean this. The Mahabharata also refers to super-terrestrial sanctions against a non-protecting king. Bhisma agrees with Manu in holding that if the king does not protect the people he assumes one-fourth of the evil deeds of the subjects.[3] Bhisma also accepts Yudhisthira's opinion that if the king fails to protect the subject any person could wield the sceptre of punishment and receive the affection of the people.[4] The Mahabharata accepts that taxes should be levied after due consideration because otherwise the subjects "hate that king who earns a notoriety for voraciousness of appetite."[5] Vamadeva even sanctions the killing of a king who transgresses the canons of Dharma and fails in the duty of protection. He says: "That king who disregards righteousness and desires to act with brute forces, soon falls away from righteousness and loses both righeteousness and profit. That king who acts according to the counsels of a vicious and sinful minister becomes a destroyer of righteousness and deserves to be slain by his subjects with all his family. Indeed he very soon meets with destruction. That king who is incompetent to discharge the duties of state-craft, who is governed by caprice in all his acts, and who indulges in brag, soon meets with destruction even if he happens to be the ruler of the whole Earth".[6]

This view as expressed by Vamadeva is remarkable, inasmuch as it is in disagreement with the general view of the Mahabharata. But as has been pointed out earlier, the Mahabharata contains several types of political views attributed to several

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1. Santiparva, Lvii, 44.
2. Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 164.
3. Santiparva, Lxxvi, 10; Anusasanaparva, Lxi.
4. Santiparva, Lxxviii, 36-38.
5. *Ibid.*, Lxxxvii, 19.
6. *Ibid.*, xcii, 7-9.

writers and quoted by Bhisma as occasion arises. But since there is no systematic attempt at constructing a logically coherent political theory, it is not possible to find an uniform type of thinking. It is true that when Bhisma quotes an author or a sage he approves of his views but he is not able to achieve logical consistency throughout. We shall say something more about the theory of regicide of Vamadeva presently, after quoting another relevant passage. "The king who tells his people that he is their protector but does not acutally protect them should be slain by his combined subjects like a mad dog afflicted with rabies..."[1] This passage, too, contains the precept of the killing of a king who does not protect the people, but only plunders their wealth. Commenting upon such passages of the Mahabharata, Bandyopadhaya says : "Prevailing political ideas, which in spite of the influence of sacerdotalism or of paternalism, recognized the ultimate sovereignty of the people and regarded the king as the custodian of popular interests who received tribute and allegience in lieu of righteous rule. The moral right of revolution was also supposed to reside in the people."[2]

We already have emphatically repudiated the conceptual existence of the theory of sovereignty in ancient Hindu thought without denying the historical existence of agencies which could be called severeign in the sense of exercising or having the capacity to exercise supreme political power. The notion of sovereignty of the people is totally absent in the Mahabharata. It is true that there are some historical references in the Mahabharata and other parts of Indian literature, to the deposition or murder of the king, which we may in our modern terms call the exercise of sovereign authority or an act of revolution. But the basic point at issue here is, whether the ancient theorists conceived of these acts only as sporadic attempts to change the actual incumbent of the political office or as the vindication of popular rights against tyrants. The mere mention of acts of murder or dethronement of the king does not prove the existence

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1. Anusasasanaparva, Lxi, 32-33.
2. Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 205.

of a democratic philosophy of inalienable rights of the people. We find examples of depositions, dethronements, and murders in the most primitive societies as well as in some of the advanced civilized democratic as well as autocratic political systems. But it is not possible to interpret every act of political murder as an example of the "glorious revolution".[1]

More than this, I do not find any Sanskrit word that answers to the modern notion of revolution. Of course, we find reference to the word Viplava in the Mahabharata but it does not signify the same thing as the modern Hindi word Viplava which means revolution.[2] More than that, the word Viplava has begun to be used only in modern times to signify the sense of the English word "revolution". Unless we can show any ancient use of the word Viplava in the sense of revolution, we would not be justified in speaking of the moral right of revolution.

Furthermore, we find no formulation of the concept of right.[3] It is true that in both the passages quoted above, in connection with the problem of regicide, there are hortatory statements about killing the king who violates Dharma. But there is no positive statement of the concept of political right to do so. Of course, one can say that when Vamadeva prescribes the slaughter of the king it amounts to saying that the people have a right to do that. But it is to be remembered that a normative statement does not necessarily imply the assertion of a right concerning that specific thing about which the statement has been made.

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[1] V. R. R. Dikshitara is an example of such historicist fallacy. See *Hindu Administrative Institutions* p. 67 : "Examples again corresponding to the glorious revolution of 1688 are not unknown to Indian history. There are several cases in which the reigning king was expelled and a new dynasty was founded by the general will of the people."

[2] For the meaning of the word *Viplava* in the Mahabharata see Otto Bohtlingk and Rūdolph Roth, *Sanskrit-Worterbuch* (St. Petersburg, 1871), VI. 1118.

[3] Cf. Beni Prasad, *Theory of Government in Ancient India* (Allahabad, 1927), p. 8 : "The individual and society become one in their moral purpose. This conception of life implies a denial of Natural Rights in the form which the idea assumed in modern Europe. The individual is merged in society against which he can have no rights. All his rights consist in the performance of his function. In the discharge of his duties, he is entitled to protection at the hands of the Government and society in general. But his rights are pre-eminently social rights. The antithesis man versus the state or society, could not have occurred to the Hindu mind."

It does not imply the existence of the concept of right. The dichotomy of right and duty arose in a specific historical situation in the west.[1] It is the product of speculations generated in a concrete historical period. In Greece there was no word that could answer to the modern word *right* although the Greek theory of common good as the teleology of social and political life became the foundation for the construction of an idealistic and purposive approach to the conception of rights. The beginnings of right are to be traced to the Latin word *Jus*. The modern approach to rights is a consequence of the rise of rationalism and individualism after the Renaissance. In Hindu philosophy the comprehensiveness of the notion of Dharma made impossible the emergence of any conceptual dichotomy of right and duty. The notion of Dharma emphasizes the social duties and functions of a person. It also involves the idea contained in the western notion of right because it implies that if somebody encroaches upon his own Dharma the latter can and should fight back but the conceptual formulation in terms of the categories of right and duty is totally different. In the word Dharma the functional approach is dominant. It postulates an organic conception of society in which all social beings are permeated with one supreme intelligent purpose which is to subserve the good of all living beings (सर्वभूतहित). But the dichotomy of rights and duties is postulated upon a conception of society as a world of claims and counter-claims. It stresses, to some extent at least, a mechanical conception of society.

The Mahabharata passages in question quoted above do categorically state that an unrighteous or non-protecting king should be slaughtered. Without denying the force of the statement that the subjects should combine and kill a non-protecting king we should like to make certain reservations concerning the idea of political resistance in Hindu writers. First, the statement about "slaying the king like a mad dog" does not occur in the Santiparva, the book which deals with political matters and has devoted considerable space to the discussion of the Dharma of the king. It occurs in another book, called Anusasanaparva, and is found in one of the chapters which discusses the excellence of the Dharma of charity. But if the writer of the Mahabharata or Bhisma has a theory of political murder or resistance, it should have been brought forth in the forefront and discussed in detail, and not relegated to chapters discussing charity. Secondly, if the Mahabharata or Bhisma had a systematic theory of resistance, they should not have been content only with stating that the king should be slain. They ought to have gone into more details. Any theorist who has a sense of political perspective would not mention the theory of resistance in a few words or a few lines and devote chapters after chapters endlessly repeating the Dharmas of the king and the four orders. Third, even in Vamadeva's statement advocating the murder of a king who appoints evil-minded ministers, we find that resistance is actually confined to one word, Badhyah—"should be killed."[1] On the other hand, far greater stress is laid on the unrighteous king perishing or being ruined in no time, and hence it is evident that no dynamic theory of resistance is referred to.

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[1] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Everyman's edition, pp. 66-67: "A Law of Nature, (*Lex Naturalis*) is a Precept, or general Rule, found out by Reason, by which a man is forbidden to do, that, which is destructive of his life, or taketh away the means of preserving the same, and to omit that, by which he thinketh it may be best preserved. For though that speak of this subject, use to confound *Jus*, and *Lex*, Right and Law ; yet they ought to be distinguished; because Right, consisteth in liberty to do, or to forbear, whereas Law, determineth and bindeth to one of them : so that Law, and Right, differ as much, as obligation, and Liberty, which in one and the same matter are inconsistent."

A further implication of the theory of elective kingship was the idea that taxation is the money paid by the subjects for receiving the benefit of protection.[2] This theory was advocated by the great supporters of monarchy like Kautilya[3], Bhisma

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1. Santiparva, xcii, 6.
2. Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 281-282.
3. Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, I, 173-174, 174 n.

Cf. राजानं अनुग्रहं याचामहे । निरनुग्रहाः परत्र गच्छाम
इति ।—Arthasastra, xiii, 1.

यो हि दोग्धीमुपास्ते च स नित्यं विन्दते पयः ।
एवं राष्ट्रमुपायेन भुञ्जानो लभते फलम् ।—Santiparva, lxxi, 7.

and Sukra. In the section discussing war (सांग्रामिकम्) Kautilya prescribes that in an open or fair battle the king devoted to Dharma (धर्मिष्ठ) should call his army together and specifying the place and time of the encounter should address thus : "I am a functionary drawing wages like yourselves (तुल्यवेतनोऽस्मि). This kingdom is to be enjoyed with your help and cooperation." As we have seen in the discussions about the "Great Elect", this theory was not a product of the orthodox Brahmanical works, but of the heretical Buddhistic schools. This theory was accepted even by those who adhered to the notion of the divine origin of kingship. According to Krishna Dvaipayana, the king was to protect the life and property of the subjects and hence if he failed to recover the property taken away by thieves it was to be made good from his own purse.[1] The Mahabharata definitely called the taxes to be the wages of the king. "The one-sixth Bali tax, import and export duties, fines and forfeitures collected from offenders—gathered in accordance with the Shastras (law and constitution), as your wages (Vetanena) shall constitute your revenue."[2] According to the Manusmriti (viii, 335-336) the king was not to leave unpunished none—niether a father, nor a teacher, nor a friend, nor a mother, nor a wife, nor a son, nor a domestic priest, in case they transgressed the bounds of their Dharma. But Manu is emphatic on the rigid adherence to the duties also of the king. He says : "Where another common man would be fined one Karshapana, the king shall be fined one thousand ; that is the settled rule."

This idea was referred to even in later works. According to Narada "both the customary receipts of a king and what is called the sixth of the produce of the soil, form the royal revenue,

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मालाकारोपमो राजन्भव माऽऽङ्गारिकोपमः ।
तथायुक्तश्चिरं राज्यं भोक्तुं शक्ष्यसि पालयन् ।।—Santiparva, lxxi, 20.

The king is definitely exhorted to act, in the matter of tax-collection like a bee sucking honey from flowers, a cowherd tending his cattle, and a leech sucking blood.

1. Quoted in Jayaswal, II, 99.

2. Santiparva, Lxxi, 10 ; this verse is translated by Jayaswal , *op. cit.*, II, 192.

the reward for the protection of his subjects."[1] Sukra, the great champion of monarchy, also talks in a similar vein : "God has made the king, though master in form, the servant of the people, getting his wages (sustenance) in taxes for the purpose of continuous protection and growth."[2] Sukra prescribes that every year the king should inspect the villages, the towns and the districts and the provinces and should find out which subjects have been pleased and which oppressed and exploited by the administrative staff (अधिकारिगणैः काश्च रंजिताः काश्च कर्षिताः). He should calmly consider the problems brought forward by the people and should have a bias and leaning for the cause of the people and not of the officialdom (प्रजापक्षं समाश्रयेत). The king should dismiss the officer who is accused by one hundred men.

The theory of the elective origin of kingship has some important institutional consequences. Even when kingship had become a hereditary and fully entrenched and powerful institution, lip service was always paid to the theory of elective kingship by elaborate coronation rituals.

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[1] Quoted in Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 162.

[2] Sukranitisara, i, 188, this verse is translated by Jayaswal ,*op. cit.*, II. 163.

CHAPTER V

THE THEORY OF THE DIVINITY OF THE KING IN ANCIENT INDIA

1. *INTRODUCTION*

The earliest stages of human evolution were marked by the predominance of the theological outlook. The various events and happenings in the universe were interpreted with reference to the intervention of the gods. The latter were conceived to be superhuman and gifted with supernormal powers, strength and will. These gods were not extra-cosmic but presided over the diverse aspects of cosmic becomings and multiple phenomena.

Deva is one of the most significant words in Hindu literature. Ordinarily it is translated into English by the word 'god'. Some of the most important Hindu political thinkers call the king as a Deva and Manu regards the king as the "great deity". But the idea of the divinity of the king arose in the context of the peculiar and distinct religious ideas and institutions of ancient India and it cannot be properly understood in terms of the Semitic notions of a monotheistic God. Hence it is necessary to grasp some of the fundamental religious conceptions of the ancient Hindus if we are to appreciate the proper significance of such ideas as "the creation of the king out of the particles of gods" or the inculcation of political obedience to the king because some god has entered his body.

The earliest picture of ancient Indian religion that we find at Mohenjo-daro and Harappa does not show any idea of monotheism although there are evidences to indicate the existence of the cult of the Mother Goddess, the worship of Rudra, and possibly the institution of priesthood. In the Vedic literarture there are frequent references to various gods, some of whom are terrestrial, others atmospheric and celestial.[1] In the Rigveda, in spite of the multiplicity of gods, monotheistic and even monistic ideas are found.[1] The monistic ideas contained in some hymns of the Rigveda and the Atharvaveda were expounded by the Upanishads and carried to their logical culmination in the system of Badarayana and the later Vedantic schools.[2] The monotheistic ideas of the Veda were expounded by the Brahmanas, the Yoga philosophy of Patanjali, the theistic system of later Nyaya and those Vedantic writers who developed the notion of a personal God who is the absolute as conditioned by the empirical categories of time, space and causality.[3] But in spite of the development of philosophical monism and religious monotheism, the notion of the multiplicity of gods never lost its hold on the Hindu mind. The conception of the plurality of gods remained a vital and dominant theological force notwithstanding the development of the idea that, after all, the various gods are in essence the same.[4] Among these various gods some have enjoyed relatively greater pre-eminence. In the Vedic days, Indra, Varuna, Agni and Prajapati were considerably more important than the lesser gods and deities. In the post-Vedic days there was developed the notion of the three most important gods, Brahma—the God of creation, Vishnu—the God of preservation, and Siva—the God of destruction. In the Satapatha Brahmana thirty three gods are referred to.[1]

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[1] R. V., i, 139, 11 ; Nirukta vii, 5.

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[1] Paul Deussen, *Outlines of Indian Philosophy* (Berlin, 1907), pp. 12-13 ; Max Müller, *The Six Systems of Indian Philosophy* (New York, 1899), pp. 51-52.

[2] V. P. Varma, "Some Aspects of the Origins of the Upanishadic Religion and Philosophy in the Vedas", *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, XXXVI, 1950 ; *Ibid.*, Monism and the Vedas," (in Hindi) , *Parijat*, Patna, October, 1946.

[3] क्लेशकर्मविपाकाशयैरपरामृष्टः पुरुषविशेष ईश्वरः।
तत्र निरतिशयं सर्वज्ञत:बीजम् ।—Yogasutra i, 25, 26.
जन्माद्यस्य यतः। शास्त्रयोनित्वात् । Vedantasutra i, 1, 283. Cf., Samkara on them : "अस्य जगतो नामरूपाभ्यां व्याकृतस्या नककर्तृभोक्तृसंयुक्तस्य प्रतिनियतदेशकालनिमित्तक्रियाफलाश्रयस्य मनसाप्यचिन्त्यरचनारूपस्य जन्मस्थितिभङ्गा यतः सर्वज्ञात् र्वशक्तेः कारणाद्भवति तद्ब्रह्मेति। महतः ऋग्वेदादेः शास्त्रस्यानेकविद्यास्थानोपबृंहितस्य प्रदीपवत्सर्वार्थविद्योतिनः सर्वज्ञकल्पस्य योनिः कारणं ब्रह्म । नहीदृशस्य शास्त्रस्यग्वदादिलक्षणस्य सर्वज्ञगुणान्वितस्य सर्वज्ञादन्यतः संभवोऽस्ति।"

Commenting on the Nyayasutra, iv, 1, 21, Vātsyayana says : गुणविशिष्टमात्मान्तरमीश्वरः तस्यात्मकल्पात् कल्पान्तरानुपपत्तिः अधर्ममिथ्याज्ञानप्रमादहान्या धर्मज्ञानसमाधिसम्पदा च विशिष्टमात्मान्तरमीश्वरः, तस्य च धर्मसमाधिफलमणिमाद्यष्टविधमैश्वर्यम् ।

[4] ऋचो अक्षरे परमे व्योमन् यस्मिन् देवा अधि विश्वे निषेदुः।
—R. V., i, 164, 39.
इन्द्रं मित्रं वरुणमग्निमाहुरथो दिव्यः स सुपर्णो गरुत्मान् ।
एकं सद्विप्रा बहुधा वदन्त्यग्निं यमं मातरिश्वानमाहुः।—R. V. i, 164, 46.

The Sanskrit word Deva which is usually translated by the the word 'god' means a being who is luminous or resplendent and hence it does not necessarily imply the notion of worship. According to the Nirukta the word Deva means any object which has the capacity of giving, shining, making luminous or living in the heavenly regions.[2] Due to the notion of luminosity contained in the word Deva, anything powerful came to be called Deva and it did not necessarily have the implication of religious veneration. At times the parents and the preceptor are called Devas.[3] The multiplicity and diversity which were characteristic of the gods in the Vedic and post-Vedic literature went on constantly increasing as more and more objects came to be called Devas.[4] But a notion of hierarchical gradation was of course maintained as, for example, the parents as gods are certainly not on the same footing as Vishnu.[5] Perhaps this sketch will enable us to grasp the significance of some of the political ideas connected with the word Deva.

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1. S. B., quoted in Dayananda, Satyarthaprakasha, vii.

2. Nirukta, vii, 17 :—देवो दानाद्वा दीपनाद्वा घोतनाद्वा द्युस्थानो भवतीति वा।

3. *Ibid.*, vii, 4.—बहुलं लोके देवदेवत्यमतिथिदेवत्यं याज्ञदैवतो पितृदेवत्यं मन्त्र इति ।

4. ये त्रिंशति त्रयस्परोदेवासो बर्हिरासदन् । R. V. vi, 2, 25, 1. त्रयस्त्रिंशतास्तुवत भूतान्यशाम्यन्प्रजापतिः परमेष्ठ्यधिपतिरासीत् ।—V. S. xiv, 31 ; According to Durgacharya and Mahidhara the Vedic gods were powerful ancient kings.

5. मातृदेवो भव पितृदेवो भव आचार्यदेवो भव अतिथिदेवो भव ।
—T. U. vii, 11.

2. *THEORY OF THE DIVINITY OF THE KING IN THE VEDIC LITERATURE*

The Vedic literature contains references to the divinity of the king. The Vedas refer to some of the gods themselves having been kings. "Varuna, true to holy law, sits down among his people ; he, most wisely sits there to govern all." In a Rigvedic hymn Mitra and Varuna are called kings and guardians of the permanent vast order.[1] In the Rigveda there is a hymn by Trasadasyu, one of the famous Vedic kings, and he attributes divinity to himself.

"Twofold is my empire, that of the whole Kshatriya race, and all the mortals are ours : the gods associate me with the acts of Varuna : I rule over (those) of the proximate form of man.
I am the king Varuna ; on me (the gods) bestow those principal energies (that are) destructive of the Asuras ; (they) associate me with the worship of Varuna. I rule over the acts of the proximate form of man.
I am Indra, I am Varuna, I am those two in greatness ! (I am the vast, profound, beautiful, heaven and earth.
I have distributed the moisture-shedding waters ; I have upheld the sky as the abode of the water ; by the water I have become the preserver of the water, the son of Aditi, illustrating the threefold elementary space.

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[1] हव्यं नो मित्रो अर्यमा सुजातो राजा सुक्षत्रो वरुणो जुषन्त ।
आ राजाना महऋतस्य गोपा सिन्धुपतीक्षत्रीया यातमर्वाक् ।
—R. V. vii, 64, 1-2 ;

Cf. Macdonell, *Vedic Mythology* p. 24 : "Varuna alone, or conjointly with Mitra, is often called a king, like the other leading deties and Yama. He is king of all, both gods and men, of the whole world, and of all that exists. Varuna is also a self-dependent ruler, a term generally applied to Indra. Much more frequently Varuna, alone or mostly in association with Mitra is called a universal monarch (सम्राज). This term is also applied to Agni a few times and oftener to Indra...The attribute of sovereignty (क्षत्र) is in a predominant manner appropriated to Varuna, generally with Mitra and twice with Aryaman also. Otherwise, it is applied only once respeictively to Agni, Brihaspati and the Asvins." *Ibid.*, p. 64 : "Indra is a universal monarch, not as the applier of the eternal laws of the universe nor as a moral ruler, but as an irresistible warrior whose mighty arm wins victory, whose inexhaustible liberality bestows the highest goods on mankind, and who delighting in the exhileration of the magnificent Soma sacrifices, confers rich rewards on the hosts of priests officiating in his worship."

Warriors well mounted, ardent for contest, invoke me ; selected (combatants) invoke me in battle; I, the affluent Indra, instigate the conflict, and, endowed with victorious prowess, I raise up the dust (in the battle).

I have done all these (deeds) ; no one resists my divine unsurpassed vigour, and when the Soma juices, when sacred songs, exhilarate me, then the unbounded heaven and earth are both alarmed."[1]

In this hymn a king calls himself Indra and Varuna who are two of the most important Vedic gods. Trasadasyu not only calls himself Indra and Varuna but claims for himself the glory almost of a supreme God. In the Atharvaveda are also found sentiments of the divinity of the king.[2] In one hymn Indra is invoked for making the king superior to his enemies. Indra is regarded as the companion of the king.[3] The following hymn of the Atharvaveda contains a definite notion of the divinity of the king.

"Chief of Indra, chief of heaven, chief of earth is this man, chief of all existence ; do thou be sole chief.
The ocean is master of the streams ; Agni is controller of the earth; the moon is master of the asterisms, do thou be sole chief.
Universal ruler art thou of Asuras, summit of human beings ; part-sharer of the gods art thou ; do thou be sole chief."[4]

In this hymn the king is called not only the part-sharer of the gods but the chief of Indra. The two hymns quoted above do show that divine epithets and attributes have been applied to the earthly king in the Vedas.[5]

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[1] R. V., iv, 42, translated by H. H. Wilson. Geldner does not accept that this hymn ascribes divinity to Trasadasyu.

[2] The references to king Parikshit in the Atharvaveda xx, 127, 7-10, have been differently interpreted. Roth and Bloomfield consider him a superhuman figure. Oldenberg differs from this view and regards him a human figure.

[3] A. V., iv, 22, 6-7.

[4] A. V. vi 86, translated by Whitney ; Cf. सत्यः सो अस्य महिमा गृणे शवो यज्ञेषु विप्रराज्ये ।—A. V. xx, 104, 2.

[5] There is no justification for Altekar's dictum : "It is interesting to note that the doctrine of the divinity of the king, which became so popular in India in the first millenium of the Christian era, was unknow the Vedic period" (p. 84 of *State and Government in Ancient India*).

During the period of the Brahmanas the philosophy of the divinity of the king was further developed, especially in connection with the institution of the sacrifices. The sacrifice is a characteristic of all west-Asiatic religions, but in the ancient religion of the Indians it grew into a highly developed and complicated institution. There are references to various kinds of sacrifices in the Brahmanas. The two most important from a political standpoint are the Rajasuya and the Asvamedha.[1] The Vajapeya and the Aindramahabhiseka have also political characteristics. The description of the sacrificial ritualism as given in the Brahmanas represents an ideal type and everyone who wanted to perform those sacrifices had to conform to the prescriptions.[2] Great stress was laid on fidelity to the details as prescribed in the books.[3] The sacrifice was a technique for manipulating the beneficient powers of the gods. The gods would favour the person in whose behalf the sacrifices were being performed.[4] No specific causal connection could be established between the nature of the various processes of the sacrifice and the results expected therefrom. The political sacrifices were the concrete mechanisms not only for obtaining the blessings of the gods but also for asserting the political power of the king.[5] In the Aitareya Brahmana Indra is supposed to have obtained the kingship among the gods because he was consecrated by the latter due to his possession of excellent mental and physical qualities.[1] We find reference in this book to the attainment of various types of royal power by the performance of sacrifice.[2]

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[1] S. B., iii, 8, 9, 4 ; *S. B. E.*, XLIV, 16. For details of the various sacrifices and their political implications the following books should be consulted: Law, *op. cit.*, pp. 161-177, 17-18 ; Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 147 ; Keith, *Religion and Philosophy*, *op. cit.*, pp. 341, 247 ; Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 15 ; Oursel, Grabowska and Stern, *op. cit.*, p. 91. For the Rajasuya R. L. Mitra, "An Imperial Coronation in Ancient India", *Indo-Aryans* (London, 1888) , ii, pp. 1-48.

[2] अध्वर is another Vedic equivalent for sacrifice besides यज्ञ

[3] Cf. Roman ideas concerning the sacrifice, Eggeling *S. B. E.*, xii, p. x also Marquarat and Mommsen : *Handbuch der romischen Altertümer*, vi. pp. 172 f.

[4] According to James Frazer the essence of the sacrifice in ancient societies. was the magical art of perpetuating the life of the plant and the animal kingdom including man. O. Gruppe emphasises, on the other hand, the attempt to obtain a share in the divine power as the dominant characteristic of the sacrifice. According to Hubert and Mauss, the sacrifice offers a medium of contact and communication between the terrestrial and the sacred world through the concrete instrumentality of the victim.

[5] Charles E. Merriam, *Political Power* (New York, 1934) , pp. 107, 234-235, discusses ceremonialism and ritual as the credanda and miranda of political power.

The Brahmanas definitely state that one who performs the sacrifice becomes a god. The Satapatha says that the sacrificer is Indra ; first because he is a Kshatriya and second because he is a sacrificer.[3] During the sacrifice, prayers were uttered not only for making the king unrivalled but also for obtaining for him the energy of the god Indra. The performer of the Vajapeya sacrifice is supposed to become the child of Prajapati.[4] The performers of the Asvamedha sacrifice are supposed to share the same world with the gods.[5] With regard to the political authority of the king performing the Rajasuya it is said : "the rajanya is most manifestly of Prajapati, (the lord) of creatures, hence while being one he rules over many."[6] Describing the special sacrifice the Taittiriya Sahmhita states that those who perform them "become Indra" and become the best among their equals.[7] According to the Taittiriya Brahmana, those who perform the Vajapeya sacrifice attain eldership and leadership.[8]

The attainment of divinity or the status of one of the gods was consequent upon two factors. First, the creative potency of the sacrificial ritual itself.[9] The notion of the power-wielding character of the sacrifice is as old as the Rigveda.[1] Second, in the actual performance of the sacrificial act itself attempts were made to invoke the gods so that they could give special powers to the king—"May Savita quicken thee for ruling, Agni for householders, Soma for tree, Brihaspati for speech, Indra for lordship, Rudra for cattle, Mitra for truth and Varuna for the lord of the law." But although these two factors finally led to the emergence of the idea that the king is Indra or the son of Prajapati, there was still no idea of a hereditary divinity. The acquistion of divinity consequent upon the performance of the sacrifice had to be individually acquired and could not be transmitted by inheritance.

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[1] A. B. viii, 4, 12.

[2] "The Devas and Asuras joined in battle. Then Prajapati concealed his eldest son Indra, lest he should be killed by the mighty Asuras. Prahlada, the son of Kayadhu, likewise concealed his son Virochana, lest he should be killed by the Devas . The Devas went to Prajapati and said 'there can be no battle for a state having no king'. Then they counted Indra to be their king with sacrifices."—T. B., i, 5, 9.

[3] S. B. , v, 4, 3, 4 ; iii, 1, 1, 8.

[4] S. *B. E.*, XLI, 32 ; T. B., i, 3, 2, 2.

[5] S. B., xiii, 4, 4, 3.

[6] S. B., v, 1, 5, 14.

[7] T. S., ii, 2, 11, 6.

[8] T. B., i, 3, 2.

[9] Summarizing Abel Bergaine's views on the Vedic sacrifice, Ragozin, *Vedic India*, pp. 388-389 says : "Sacrifice is an imitation of the chief phenomena of the sky and the atmosphere. Now it is a notion as old as the race, that a thing ardently wished for may be made to come to pass in reality, by performing or reproducing that thing in effigy. The strange aberration was one of those that died hardest, for we find it very much alive down to the later Middle Ages. Sacrifice looked at from this point of view, would be then a sort of beneficent conjuring, in accordance with the bright and genial Aryan spirit, while the dark and lowering Turanian nature revels in spells and incantations for malicious injurious purposes."

But the idea of the king's divinity acquired by the performance of the sacrifices, had several competing notions to wrestle with and hence the dominating spell of it is considerably minimized. We have already stressed that the notion of divinity in Hindu religious and political thought must be understood with the definite realization that we are dealing with a system accepting the multiplicity of gods. Moreover, although nobody but a powerful king could perform the Rajasuya and the Asvamedha sacrifices, anybody could perform the minor ones and acquire the magical potency and partial divinity obtained by the performance of the ritual. Hence any special claim to divinity by the king because of the performance of the sacrifices is considerably minimized. We also find that in the period subsequent to the Brahmanas arose the great philosophy of non-dualism which inculcated that the spiritual essence of a man is identical with the cosmic and transcendent absolute. Any person who had the requisite philosophical knowledge could experience this state of identity. Hence, philosophically speaking, the qualitative difference between man and the gods which would exist if complete separation were

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[1] R. V., i, 93, 5 ; x, 90, 7-16 ; x, 92, 10. Dasgupta, *Indian Philosophy* Vol. I, p. 22 : "The sacrifice was believed to have existed from eternity like the Vedas.... Sacrifice is regarded as possessing a mystical potency superior even to the Gods, who it is sometimes stated attained to their divine rank by means of sacrifice." Haug points out that in the Vedic conception the sacrifice existed "as an invisible thing at all times and is like the latent power of electricity in an electrifying machine, requiring only the operation of a suitable apparatus in order to be elicited."

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maintained between the human and the divine spheres is considerably reduced.[1]

The idea of the divinity of the king contained in the religious philosophy of the sacrificial institution has been considered tantamount to the moral recognition of political authority. Bandyopadhaya is an advocate of this view. "This conquest was not merely an act of military success, but came to be associated with religious ceremonies and sacrifices which gave it the stamp of moral recognition."[2] "...rites for the propitiation of gods, for securing to the governing authority a moral sanction and for regulating the relation between the upholder of law and order and his subjects."[3] Since Vedic times the sacrifice has been associated in the Indian mind with those aspects of cognitive and emotional orientation which we call "religious'. In spite of the fact that both in the Rigveda and the Brahmanas the sacrifice was exalted to a cosmic and divine plane, the sentiment of respect which it commanded never lost the aspect of veneration given to magical objects in ancient societies.[4] The sacrifice had definitely a magical character.[5] Although the sacrificer is said to be identified with Varuna who is the most moral of the Vedic gods, we do not think that the sacrifice was ever considered as imparting moral sanction to political authority. The emergence of power and prowess from the sacrifice is the dominant idea. Gradually the notion grows that the sacrifice is powerful in itself and in the later Mimansa philosophy the mechanism of the sacrificial acts was conceived as producing result without the intervention of any Godhead. Hence the sacrificial cult led to the idea of the investment of the king with a magical and divine authority, but did not produce any conception of the moral recognition of the authority of the king because in the age of the Brahmanas the sacrifice did not have a moral character. This only means that it was morally neutral, the emphasis being on the power-generative character of the sacrifice.

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[1] आत्मानमेव प्रियमुपासीत स य आत्मानमेव प्रियमुपास्ते न हास्य प्रियं प्रमायुकं भवति । योऽन्यां देवतामुपास्ते न स वेद यथा पशुरेव स देवानाम्—S. B. x,v, 4.

तमिदं निगतं सहः स एष एक एकवृदेक एव ।
सर्वे अस्मिन् देवा एकवृतो भवन्ति । —A. V. xiii, 4, 20. 21.

[2] Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, pp. 166-67.

[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 144-46.

[4] Emil Durkheim, *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* translated by J. W. Swain (London, 1915), pp. 214.16, 206 ff.

[5] Kātyāyana Srautasutra, xix, 5, 13 ; Kausika Sutra, xiii, 1-6.

The idea of the divinity of the king should not be construed to mean that the king was conceived of as the representative of the god.[1] This notion is not found in the Brahmanas. Nor do we find any evidence for the following view : "As the devas were the universal rulers and as the king was (transformed into) their mundane counterpart with similar rights and responsibilities vested in him, the cooperation of these powers was sure to bring all-sided prosperity to men. Sacrifice brought such a desired harmony between the divine and human elements."[2] We have repudiated the existence of any theory of political or moral rights in ancient India. Such a conception could not arise in the face ofthe concept of Dharma which comprehends what we call in modern terms as rights and duties, Dharma emphasizing the idea of one's duty. The king did not have any rights against somebody. He was performing his Dharma and the other people were performing theirs. Furthermore, there is not found in ancient Hindu thought any notion of the attainment of harmony between the human and divine spheres of existence. In the sacrifices the emphasis is on the exaltation of the kingly power or of the power of the performer of any sacrifice and not on harmony between two separately organized groups of powers.

So far, the idea of the divinity of the king as found in the Vedas and the Brahmanas has been analyzed.[3] Some of the vital limitations on the institutionalization of such a concept also must be considered. The Vedas do not mention that kingship is a divinely ordained institution with the consequent implication that republicanism is a transgression of divine command. It is true that the Vedic gods are given monarchical attributes but there is no condemnation of any non-monarchical institution. Even the Mahabharata, while accepting the divine origin of kingship, contains a discussion of the techniques of maintaining power in a republic. Furthermore, the ideas of the divinity of the king are only casually and sporadically mentioned in the Vedas. In the great Vedic hymns of creation there is no special mention of the king being created by God. Hence in the Vedas, the divinity of the king is not a dominating idea. It is true that in the Brahmanas the performers of the Rajasuya and the Asvamedha sacrifices are promised attainment of divine status, but this notion of royal divinity was challenged by the notion of the divinity of the Brahmin class.[1] Therefore we find that because of the sporadic character of the Vedic teachings about royal divinity and the competing claims of Brahmanical divinity,[2] kingship in India never became a divine institution in practice, as it did in Egypt.[3] We have no examples of the deification of kings or of the worship of the king or his ancestors in ancient India, and hence, except for the idea of divine sanctification, the practical institutional results of this theory of the king's divinity were not considerable. In the Mahabharata and in the Puranas there are several references to kings performing sacrifices, but these are supposed only to have enhanced their power or proclaimed their already enhanced power but not to have made actual gods of them.

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[1] Keith, *Religion and Philosophy of the Veda, op. cit.*, p. 481, wrongly calls the king to be the representative of Prajapati. Sri Aurobindo, *The Spirit and Form of Indian Polity* (Calcutta, 1947) p. 29 says : "The spiritual mind of India regarded life as a manifestation of the self. . .the king was the living representative of the Divine", but gives no corroborating evidence.

[2] Bandyopadhaya, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

[3] For a different view, Sarkar, *Positive Background, op. cit.*, II, 225.

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[1] S. B., ii, 2, 2, 6 ; T. S., i, 7, 3.

[2] The Vishnu Dharmasutra, xix, 20-21 says :

देवाः परोक्षदेवाः प्रत्यक्षदेवाः ब्राह्मणाः । ब्राह्मणैर्लोका धार्यन्ते ।
ब्राह्मणानां प्रसादेन दिवि तिष्ठन्ति देवताः ।।

[3] Henri Frankfort, *Kingship and the Gods* (Chicago, 1949) pp. 245-246 ; Contrast Henri Beer, Foreword to Alexander Moret's *The Nile and Egyptian Civilization* (London, 1927), p. xviii : "Never was kingship by right divine so absolute as that which ruled over this country, once the North and South were united. Pharaoh owns everything which belongs to his people, and owns his people itself. Through him the people communicate with the gods. It is just this apotheosis of the King in the literal sense of the word, which is the striking characteristic of Egypt. What happens (according to M. Davy's hypothesis in *From Tribe to Empire*) when clans are concentrated under a chief, and that chief gathers up the totemic mana, also happens as the result of a long process of concentration, more completely than in any other kingdom or empire, in respect of everything embraced by the Egyptian kingship. The king becomes sole holder of the sacred force. And in this process of social organization we clearly see religion and power tightening their bonds as each supports the other."

Buddhism launched a vigorous protest against the sacrificial system. It was in this respect only extending forward the trend already shown by the Upanishads. The Mundaka Upanishad outspokenly derides the ritualistic system of the Brahmanas as futile. The Upanishads tried to substitute intellectual study and meditation for the external ceremonial performance of the sacrifice.[1] But while the Upanishads only attacked the sacrificial system in a rationalistic and philosophical manner Buddhism condemned the physical violence associated with the sacrifice—violence to animals. Due to the Buddhist influence political sacrifices almost died down in India for a long time. Buddhism had destroyed the intellectual foundation of the sacrificial system by reducing the orthodox Vedic gods to a very subordinate status.[2] But with the reassertion of the old Vedic tradition in the post-Mauryan era once again royal sacrifices began to be performed.

3. *KAUTILYA'S THEORY OF THE DIVINITY OF THE KING*

In Kautilya's Arthasastra we find the king compared with gods. "It is the king in whom the duties of both Indra (the rewarder) and Yama (the punisher) are blended, and he is a visible dispenser of punishments and rewards ; whosoever disregards kings will be visited with divine punishments, too. Hence kings shall never be despised."[3] Kautilya does not talk about the inheritance of royal power from the two gods Indra and Yama. Indra had been a powerful god during Vedic days, but gradually his influence declined and he was looked upon merely as the giver of rains. Yama is the god of death who takes care of the future condition of people after death in accordance with their past Karma. Kautilya makes no mention of the Hindu trinity. He is interested in making a functional comparison between the king and the gods. There is the implication that the gods inflict punishments after death but the king dispenses rewards and punishments visibly in this life.

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[1] V. P. Varma, "Decline of the Vedic Religion *Journal of the Bihar Research Society*, Vol. XXXI, Part iv, (Dec., 1945).

[2] *Dialogues of the Buddha, op. cit.*, pp. 10, 26-31, 105.

[3] Arthasastra, i, 13, p. 24.

Kautilya stresses the maintenance of good feelings towards the king by asserting that kings should not be despised, because one who hates a king is punished by the gods. Kautilya does not refer to any positive sentiment of obedience or allegiance or reverence but to the negative notion of non-contempt for the king. Both Bhisma and Manu refer to the same sentiment of non-disdain or non-hatred for the king. The reference to divine punishment is significant because according to the Hindu view of the inexorable efficacy of Karma, divine punishment cannot be avoided since it can bring a man under its sway even after death or in any future birth.[1] Jayaswal is correct in maintaining that the passage referred to above does not preach either divine origin of kingship or absolutism, but he is not correct in maintaining that the divine punishment referred to above is to be related to the notion of sin involved in treason because "treason was always regarded as a sin."[2] There is no discussion of treason involved here. Moreover, it is not correct to state that Hindu thinkers always regarded treason as a sin because in extreme cases, Vamadeva and Sukra prescribe regicide.[3]

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[1] Cf., a Chinese idea, Liang Chi-chao, *History of Chinese Political Thought*, p. 166 : "Even if these people escape punishment from those in authority Heaven will throw the peace of normal relationships in great confusion."

[2] Jayaswal, *op. cit.*, II, 56.

[3] According to Kautilya treason was an extremely serious political crime. He says : राज्यकामुकमन्तःपुरप्रधर्षकमटव्यमित्रोत्साहकं दुर्गराष्ट्रदण्डकोपकं वा शिरोहस्तप्रादीपिकं घातयेत् । ब्राह्मणः तमपः प्रवेशयेत् । Thus the following activities were condemned as treasonable :—

(a) Being greedy for acquiring the kingdom..

(b) Encouraging enemies or forest tribes, helping or inviting enemies beyond the borders.

(c) Attempting to foment troubles and encouraging feelings of disaffection among the armed forces or in the subject population.

(d) Violation of the purity of the inner apartments.

If the Brahmin was guilty of these treasonable offences he was to be drowned. It is clear that Kautilya prescribes the death penalty for treason but he does not imply the notion of moral or spiritual sin but only of political crime, In the preceding chapter we referred to the idea of the setting up of the first king by the people. Here the king is compared with the gods. This may appear as a contradiction to those who approach Kautilya from the standpoint of seventeenth century European political thought with its individualistic social contract theory formulated in opposition to the divine right theory. Jayaswal seems to think in this strain and hence he says that the statement concerning comparison of the kings with the divinities was "urged by the official spy in defense of the new king and was intended to support him, in reply to those who cited the social contract theory of kingship."[1] This view is unjustified on two grounds. First, Kautilya does not seem conscious of any contradiction in upholding simultaneously the theory of the election of the first king and then comparing kings with gods. The Mahabharata also accepts the divine origin of the first king and refers to contracts made with him. It goes further than Kautilya in so far as it specifically mentions the Sanskrit word Samaya—contract. Neither Kautilya nor Bhisma thought in terms of the rights of the king versus the subjects and vice versa and hence the contradiction involved in the simultaneous acceptance of the theories of social contract and divine right is not a problem for them. Second, Jayaswal's statement is incorrect on factual grounds. To prove our case we shall briefly mention the occasion at which these views about election and divine comparison are mentioned. Kautilya is discussing the topic "Protection of Practice For or Against One's Own Cause in One's Own State."[2] He is specifying the ways as to how royal spies shall know the nature of public views about the king and how the treacherous and other dissentient and dangerous elements shall be handled. The spies were to form opposing factions and carry on discussions at places frequented by people. One spy would narrate the accomplishments of the king. The other spy would then say that the people elected Manu as the first king and then compare the kings with gods. Hence, actually, both these statements about the primeval election of Manu and the comparison of kings with gods are parts of the speech of one and the same spy. Jayaswal construes them to be the speeches of two different spies and hence he tries to interpret them as two opposed views of the king's origin and authority.

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[1] *Ibid.*, Beni Prasad, *Theory of Government in Ancient India*, p. 209 says: "A Hindu Ms. of Bundela genealogy of the 17th century has a curious preface in which government originated in a pact though supernatual aid is also called in. (The genealogy is preserved in the State Library of Chhatarpur in Central India. For a detailed notice, Beni Prasad in the Journal of the U. P. Historical Society, 1922)."

[2] Arthasastra, i, 3. "स्वविषये कृत्याकृत्यपक्षरक्षणम्"—"तत्र येऽनुप्रशंसेयुः तानितरस्तं च प्रतिषेधयेत–'मात्स्यन्यायाभिभूताः प्रजाः मनु वैवस्वतं राजानं चक्रिरे । ··· इन्द्रयमस्थानमेतत् राजानः प्रत्यक्षहेडप्रसादाः । तानवमन्यमानान् दैवोऽपि दण्डः स्पृशति ।" It is clear that the whole passage is the speech of one ngle spy.

According to Bottazi a complete theory of social contract is found in the Arthasastra of Kautilya,[1] because the king is declared to be invested with sacred character solely by virtue of the authority which the people conferred upon him on the ground of his being the only defense of their existence. This explanation is inadequate because there is no explicit mention in the Arthasastra of the view that the kings are comparable to gods because they owe their authority to the people. Besides being inadequate on the ground of reading into the texts ideas which are not contained there, this view of Bottazi is unsatisfactory because nowhere in Hindu thought does occur the idea of derivation of sacred authority or character from the conferring of authority by the people. Such an idea can only be maintained if somebody proved that according to the Hindu thinkers the people themselves had a sacred or divine character, because any person or group can confer upon another only that object or quality which originally belongs to him or it. "The voice of people is the voice of God" is not a Kautilyan idea.

4. *THE MAHABHARATA'S THEORY OF THE DIVINITY OF THE KING*

The epics, the Manusmriti and Sukra extend the notion of the divinity of the king which is mentioned in the earlier literature but does not occupy a very dominant place in the total picture of political ideas and thought. The Ramayana contains a more exalted notion of the divinity of the king. "The king is the truth, he is virtue, he is the pedigree of the high-born, he is, as it were, the mother and the father, he surpasses by his excellent conduct the gods, Yama, Kubera, Indra and Varuna. If the king did not establish the distinction between good and bad deeds, this universe alas! would be like darkness and no sound knowledge could exist."[1] In the previous writers, only notions of the king becoming a god or being comparable with the gods were found, but the Ramayana upholds that the king could even surpass the gods.

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[1] O. B. Bottazi, *Precursori di Niccolo Machiavelli in Grecia ad in India, Eautilya ad Thucidide*, pp. 98-99, quoted in Ghoshal, *op. cit.*, p. 137 n.

In the Mahabharata we find the most comprehensive notions of the king's divinity.[2] Bhisma in one of the chapters of the Santiparva narrates the statements made by Indra on the question of the divinity of the king. The king is superior to every one and any one who disregards him does not get the rewards of the sacrifices performed by him. "The very gods do not disregard a virtuous king who is truly an eternal god."[3] The lord of creatures wills that the Kshatra or military power should operate to keep the cosmic process going on. Vayu calls the king to be Indra, Yama and Dharma.[1] The king assumes different forms and sustains and supports everything. One of grounds for the exaltation of the king, provided by Vayu, is the importance of the former in maintaining the sacrificial cult. Brihaspati expounds the divinity of the king in great detail, when asked by Vasumana as to whom the people should adore for obtaining eternal happiness.

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[1] Ramayana, ii, 67, 34-35 ; the Sanskrit word used here is *Vishishyante* and the commentator Rama interprets that as indicating a sense of transcendence or humiliation of the gods.

[2] Describing the epic notion of the divinity of the king, E. W. Hopkins *Epic Mythology* (Strasburg, 1915) p. 64 says: "certain men are gods on earth. Whether this honor came first to priest king [E. Kuhn, *Zu den Arischen Anschauungen Vom Koniglum*, p. 216, cites Ramayan 2, 102, 4, देवत्वे सम्मतो मम to illustrate king as deva by consent], or husband, the epic recognises fully that the priest as well as the king is divine... A king or prince or a royal seer is called Naradeva, a priest is Bhumideva, 'earth-god'. It is only as a god that a king may accept a gift (he is Indra, Varuna, Kubera and Yama incorporate, R. 7, 76, 31 f.)... He incorporates many gods, Brihaspati, Prajapati, and even Bhava and represents regularly five divinities. His touch is divinely healing...If not kingly, he is no king, therefore no god ; and as such may be slain like mad dog (Ramayana 22, 196, 1-1 ; *ibid*. 3, 33, 16). Hence, as he has 'something human', being only 'one quarter Indra', he is said to 'obtain divinity on dying.' According to the epic, Atri was the first to deify a king. *Ibid*., p. 184. Hopkins says, "The point of the story is that the king is god on earth, as is the priest, and they must combine to keep the lower orders in subjection. The king here is the Rajarsi Prithu Vainya. This king's father had been dethroned and executed for his sins, in accordance with the principle that a wicked king 'should be killed like a mad dog', so that his son was naturally pleased to be made divine". *Ibid*.

[3] Santiparva, lxv, 28-30.

Brihaspati upholds that the existence of the king is absolutely necessary for the maintenance of the social order. The kingless state is compared to the state of darkness without the sun and the moon. It is a condition of perfect anarchy like that of animals without the herdsman to look after them. If the king would not afford protection, nobody would be able to say—"this is mine—wives, sons, food and other kinds of property would not then exist."[2] The world depends upon agriculture and trade and is protected by the Vedas and these are protected by the king.[3] "Since the king, taking a heavy load upon himself, protects his subjects with the aid of a mighty force, it is for this that the people are able to live in happiness. Who is there that will not worship him in whose existence the people exist and in whose destruction the people are destroyed? The person who does what is agreeable and beneficial to the king and who bears (a share of) the burthen of kingly duties that strike every caste with fear, conquers both this and the other world. That man who even thinks of doing an injury to the king, without doubt meets with grief here and goes to hell hereafter. No one should disregard the king by taking him for a man for he is really a high divinity in human form."[4] Brihaspati makes a functional comparison between the king and the gods. The king becomes the god of fire when, deceived by falsehood he burns with his fierce energy the sinful offenders before him. He becomes the sun-god when he observes through his spies the activities of all people. He becomes the god of destruction when in anger he destroys wicked men. He becomes the god of the nether-worlds (or of justice) when he inflicts upon the evil persons severe punishments and favours the righteous by bestowing rewards upon them. He becomes the god of wealth on earth when he gives profusely to those who have rendered service to him and snatches away the wealth of those who have offended him.[1] Since the king is such an important being nobody should try either to displease him or to covet his wealth. "They that appropriate wealth belonging to the king sink senseless into a deep hell of eternal gloom and infamy. Who is there that will not worship the king who is adored by such terms as delighter of the people, giver of happiness, possessor of prosperity, the foremost of all healer of injuries, lord of earth, and protector of men?"[2] Utathya distinguishes the king who is devoted to Dharma from one transgressing its canons.[3] The king should be devoted to Dharma and not indulge in the gratification of his own desires. The king who conforms to Dharma attains the status of a god while he who acts in a contrary manner goes to hell.[4] Thus the superterrestrial fears of hell operated not only in the case of subjects but also in that of the king.

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[1] *Ibid.*, lxxii, 20-26.

[2] Santiparva, lxviii, 15.

[3] *Ibid.*, 35.

[4] *Ibid.*, 36-40.

An analysis was presented in the preceding chapter of the two traditions concerning the origins of kingship in the Mahabharata. In both the Manu and the Prithu traditions occur instances of the intervention of the gods in the institution of terrestrial kingship. We shall analyse now only those portions of the two traditions which are relevant here in connection with the theory of the divinity of the king. In the Manu tradition we found that people could not lead a happy life only on the basis of the compacts made by them. Hence they approached Brahma — the God of creation and told him : "Without a king, O divine lord, we are going to destruction. Appoint some one as our

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1. *Ibid.*, 41-47.
2. *Ibid.*, 53-54.
3. *Ibid.*, xc, 3.
4. *Ibid.*, 4.

king! All of us shall worship him and he shall protect us!"[1] Brahma asked Manu to become the king of the people and being given assurance by the latter Manu accepted the kingship. The people agreed to have special reverence for the king. The king does not have to demand that. Manu is not a god, but in the Hindu tradition he is sometimes supposed to be the founder of the human race. Hence, although not divine, he is certainly far beyond any ordinary mortal.

More detailed references to the divinity of the king and to the intervention of the gods in the creation of kingship are found in the Prithu tradition. The condition of the people after perverse psychological factors had destroyed the beneficent operation of Dharma is vividly described in the Mahabharata. The attempt to emancipate them from the evil conditions consequent upon the loss of the Vedas and Dharma is not made by the people themselves or their leaders but by the gods. The latter were terrified to see the destruction of Dharma and hence they approached Brahma. (We have earlier referred to the Hindu trinity. The members of this group enjoy higher power than the ordinary gods). The gods, being afflicted with grief, said to Brahma, with folded hands: "O God, the eternal Vedas have been afflicted in the world of men by convetousness and error! For this we have been struck with fear. Through loss of the Vedas, O Supreme Lord, righteousness also has been lost! For this, O Lord of the three worlds, we are about to descend to the level of human beings! Men used to pour upwards while we used to pour downwards. In consequence, however, of the cessation of all pious rites among men, great distress will be our lot. Do thou then, O Grandsire, think of that which would benefit us, so that the universe, created by thy power, may not meet with destruction"![2] Being thus entreated, Brahma composed a book on the art of punishment for the guidance of political and social conduct. This treatie of Brahma was later abridged. Thus the art of punishment is ascribed a divine origin. The gods then approached Vishnu—the God of preservation—and solicited him to indicate a king for the mortals. Vishnu created a son out of his lustre, to be the king of the humans. It is one of the dominant ideas of the Hindu Yoga that a person who has practised physical and mental askesis develops supernormal powers. These powers are called Vibhuti in the Yoga tradition and Riddhibala, in the Buddhist tradition.[1] One of these supernormal powers is the capacity to create something out of nothing by the sheer force of will-energy. The gods have such powers. Thus we find that the first king is created out of the spiritual energy of the god Vishnu and is the latter's "mental son". Prithu was the son of Vena who was fifth in descent from this "mental son" of the God Vishnu. Prithu was instructed in the ways of his conduct by the gods and the sages. He was consecrated to kingship by the God Vishnu, the other gods, seers, protectors of the people and the Brahmins. Thus Prithu not only was descended from the "mental son", of the God Vishnu, but also was crowned king by all the gods. We have examples of the myth of the divine descent applied even in later historical times. The medieval Rajput dynasties in India claimed solar and lunar descent. The myth of divine descent is found among the Egyptians, the Incas and others.[2] In India this myth is not used in the Vedic and later ancient period of Indian history but only in the medieval and late medieval times.

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[1] *Ibid.*, lxvii, 20-21.

[2] Santiparva, lix, 24-27.

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[1] जन्मौषधिमन्त्रतपःसमाधिजाः सिद्धयः
जात्यन्तरपरिणामः प्रकृत्यापूरात् ।
निर्माणचित्तान्यस्मितामात्रात् ।— —Yogasutra iv, 1,2 14.

[2] MacIver, *op. cit.*, pp. 13-14.

Cf., Gunnar Landtman, *The Origin of the Inequality of Social Classes* (London, 1938), p. 323: "The increased authority which religious and magical power confers upon a ruler has contributed to the extreme degree of authority which has signalized the potentates of not a few semi-civilized or barbarous peoples. An instance is furnished by the Inca soverign. As the representative of the sun and asserting his claims as a superior being, he stood at the head of the priesthood. At the same time he was the source from which all secular power flowed. He was, in short, 'himself the state'. The sovereign was placed at an immeasurable distance above his subjects. 'Even the proudest of the once Inca nobility, claiming descent from the same divine origin as himself could not venture into the royal presence unless barefoot, and bearing a light burden on his shoulders in token of homage'. (*Prescott, Conquest of Peru*, i, 26 sq.)"

After Prithu's consecration, "The eternal Vishnu himself... confirmed his power, telling him,—no one, O king, shall transcend thee ! Then that divine Vishnu entered the body of that monarch in consequence of his penances."[1] For this reason Prithu was supposed to command almost divine allegiance from the people, and was regarded as one among the human gods.

But the Mahabharata does not sanction actual king-worship in spite of the notion of the entrance of Vishnu in the body of Prithu. This notion of the entrance of the god into a human body seems to be a primitive idea and is found referred to in the ritual texts of the Brahmanas.[2] But the probable implication of king worship is not found in the Mahabharata. According to Hocart the worship of kings is one of the earliest forms of religion.[3] But historically speaking we have, in ancient India, no evidence at all of the actual worship of the king or of the theoretical advocacy of it. The Sanskrit words that are usually translated as worship are Puja and Archana. But from the evidence of Sanskrit literature it is clear that these words do not always imply actual worship. They imply a sentiment of veneration.[4] Hence we should not conclude from the passages quoted so far from the English translation of the Mahabharata, mentioning the word 'worship', that this book advocates king-worship as a necessary concomitant to its idea of the divinity of the king. The translator has used the word 'worship' for the Sanskrit words Puja and Archana, but we think that his rendering is misleading and hence wherever we find hints of king worship in the Mahabharata on the basis of English translations we have to interpret it always in the sense of the sentiment of veneration.[5]

[1] Santiparva, lix, 128.

[2] Law, *op., cit.* pp. 172-73.

[3] Carl J. Friedrich and Frederick M. Watkins, "Monarchy," *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, x, 579.

[4] Manusmriti, vii, 82, 203. Cf. also the Sukraniti, i, :—

समाप्तविद्यं संदृष्ट्वा तत्कार्ये तं नियोजयत् ।
विद्याकलोत्तमान् दृष्ट्वा वत्सरे पूजयेच्च तान् ॥

[5] Cf. the use of the word पूजन in the विष्णुस्मृतिः, साधूनां पूजनं कुर्यात् देवब्राह्मणान् सततमेव पूजयेत् ।

Some of the dominating spell of the notion of the divinity of the king, especially as represented in the Prithu tradition, would be lessened if we took into consideration one of the fundamental implications of the theory of Karma. According to this law of Karma, after accumulating a certain amount of spiritual merit by penances a man could become a god, although not one of the three most important members, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva. In the Puranas there are stories about gods attempting to make those men who would be engaging in severe penances, deviate from the path of purity and discipline because they would be afraid that these men would in turn become gods and take over their position. The Mahabharata states the view of the fall of men from heaven in the same chapter in which it discusses the consecration of Prithu. "A person, upon the exhaustion of his merit, comes down from heaven to earth, and takes birth as a king conversant with the science of chastisement. Such a person becomes endued with greatness and is really a portion of Vishnu on earth. He becomes possessed of great intelligence and obtains superiority over others."[1] Thus this implication of Karma that a man can obtain heaven, can obtain the status of gods and can fall from heaven after the merits of his good deeds have been exhausted would tend to minimize considerably the qualitative difference between a man and a god. Hence the romantic and sacrosanct majestic grandeur that would have been implied by the divinity of a king in a system of thought accepting monotheism is considerably neutralized in the Hindu political philosophy. The distance that separates Moses and the Jew's from Jehovah is not the distance that separates a man from Indra and Varuna and Kubera, according to the Hindu thinkers.

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[1] Santiparva, lix, 133-134.

5. *THE MANUSMṚITI'S THEORY OF THE KING'S DIVINITY*

After having analyzed the views of the Mahabharata we pass on to Manu. Manu starts with accepting the necessity of the royal power of punishment because a pure man is difficult to be found.[1] He only talks of the difficulty of finding a pure man and one should not read into him "the old Brahmanical idea of the universal wickedness of man."[2] According to the ethics of Karma there can be no generalization about the nature of mankind. One's nature is formed in accordance with one's Karma and hence the only correct problem is to know about individual nature. The psychic structure and disposition of a man (the Sukshama sarira) is the product of a long course of evolutionary endeavours in accordance with the merits and demerits of one's Karma. Due to the operation of Karma, different individuals are at different psychological levels. Hence any generalization about the universal goodness or universal badness of human nature cannot be legitimately made. Manu accepts the creation of the king by God. He says: "When these creatures, being without a king through fear dispersed in all directions, the Lord created a king for the protection of the world, taking (for that purpose) eternal particles of Indra, of Anila, of Yama, of Arka, of Agni, of Varuna, of Chandra and of Kubera.[3] Because a king has been formed of particles of those lords of the gods, he therefore surpasses all created beings in lustre; and like the sun, he burns eyes and hearts; nor can anybody on earth even gaze on him. Through his (supernatural) power he is fire and wind, he sun and moon, he the lord of justice (Yama), he Kubera, he Varuna, he great Indra."[4] This passage shows the importance of taking into consideration the fundamental distinction between monotheism and polytheism for understanding the Hindu notion of the divinity

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1. Manusmriti, vii, 22.
2. Ghoshal, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
3. Manusmriti, vii, 3-4.
4. *Ibid.*, 5-6.

of the king. Manu says that the king has been made or created by the lord out of the eternal particles of eight deities.[1] From the commentary on the Manusmriti by Medhatithi it appears that Manu understands by the "lord" the Vedic Hiranyagarbha or the Prajapati of the Brahmanas,[2] the two gods that very definitely are monotheistically conceived. Since both of them have been identified and are often used interchangeably the problem of polytheism versus monotheism does not arise. Hence we think that Manu has in mind the creation of the human king by God himself out of the eternal particles of eight gods. He does not solve the logical difficulty involved in the notion of particles.[3] If the particles of the gods are non-physical, a physical human being could not be created out of them. If the particles of the gods are physical, they cease to be gods and become very much human. Manu accepts the creation of the king for the protection of the world.[1]

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[1] Commenting upon the creation of the king out of eternal particles, R. Shamashastri, *Evolution of Indian Polity* (Calcutta, 1920) says : "This picture of a king being a deity in human form, as drawn by Manu, should be contrasted with the picture of a king, portrayed as a mere mortal in the Vedas and the Arthasastra. I can conceive no other reason for this sudden change of ideas about the right of kings than the necessity of hiding the low birth of restored Dravidian kings of Buddhistic period and of strengthening their royal power so as to be able to guard the interests of the Brahmans. This is purely a Brahmanic conception consistent with their theistic religion." Our account is clear enough to indicate the hollowness of Mr. Sastri's ideas.

[2] Medhatithi, Bhasya on the Manusmriti ed. by Ganganath Jha (Calcuta, 1932-39), 2 vols.

. I have been stressing that if we interpret the Hindu theory of the divinity of the king in the context of its metaphysical foundations then we come to the conclusion that that qualitative difference between gods and men is not so fundamental in Hindu theology as in its Semitic counterpart and hence attribution of divinity to the king need not imply the majesty and the vastness that it does in the Semitic tradition.

. In the cosmological portions of the Manusmriti the author says that even other created beings (and not only the king) contain divine particles (आत्ममात्रासु) ... joining minute particles even of those six which possess measureless power [(i) the great one, (ii) egoism, (iii) mind, (iv) the subtile or rudimentary elements, (v & vi) the organs of sensation and action.] with particles of himself, he created all beings. Because those six (kinds of) minute particles which form the creator's frame enter these creatures, therefore the wise call his frame sārira."

तदाविशन्ति भूतानि महान्ति सह कर्मभिः ।
मनश्चावयवैः सूक्ष्मैः सर्वभूतकृदव्ययम् ।।
तेषामिदं तु सप्तानां पुरुषाणां महौजसाम् ।
सूक्ष्माभ्यो मूर्तिमात्राभ्यः संभवत्यव्ययाद् व्ययम् । Manusmriti, 18,19.

Manu formulates the theory of "non-disregard" of the king on two grounds. First, even if the king be a boy he should not be disregarded because he is "a great deity in human form."[2] "Because a king has been formed of particles of those lords of the gods, he therefore surpasses all created beings in lustre ; like the sun, he burns eyes and hearts ; nor can anybody on earth even gaze on him."[3] The king, created by God, has as his instrument "punishment"—Danda—who is the son of God.[4] Manu identifies the king and the punishment, showing thereby the great importance of coercion for the maintenance of kingly authority.[5] The second ground for the justification of non-hatred and non-disregard of the king is the great power of the latter by which he can suppress any person and even destroy him. According to Manu, any person who due to delusion harbors evil feelings against the king doubtless perishes because the latter quickly makes up his mind to destroy such a man. The king is full of all kinds of lustre and has the power of death over man and therefore he should not be disregarded. "Fire burns one man only, if he carelessly approaches it ; the fire of a king's (anger) consumes the (whole) family, together with its cattle and its hoard of property."[1] Hence Manu says that no person should disregard the orders of the king. The king is formed of the lustre of all gods and in his favor resides Padma, the goddess of fortune. In the valor of the king dwells victory and in his anger abides death. Hence Manu is emphatic in his view that no man should transgress that law which the king decrees with reference to his favorites nor his orders which impose sanctions on the recalcitrant elements.

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[1] क्षत्रियस्य परो धर्मः प्रजानामेव पालनम् ।
निर्दिष्टफलभोक्ता हि राजा धर्मेण युज्यते ॥
—Manusmriti, vii, 144.

[2] Manusmriti, vii, 8.

Without implying any perfect or even partial comparison between the simple theory of Manu and the highly sophistical dialectial logic involved in the philosophical science of the state of Hegel, it may be worthwhile to note here some of the latter's remarks: "The state is the world which the mind has made for itself ; its march, therefore, is on lines that are fixed and absolute. How often we talk of the wisdom of God in nature. But we are not to assume for that reason that the physical world of nature is a loftier thing than the world of mind. As high as mind stands above nature, so high does the state stand above physical life. *Man must therefore venerate the state as a secular deity.* [Hegel uses the words *Irdish-Gottliches*]....*The March of God in the world, that is what the state is.* The basis of the state is the power of reason actualizing itself as will. In considering the Idea of the state, we must not have our eyes on particular states or on particular institutions. Instead we must consider the Idea, this actual God, by itself." *Philosophy of Right*, Additions to Paragraphs 272 and 258.

[3] Manusmriti, 5-6.

[4] *Ibid.*, 14.

[5] *Ibid.*, 17.

But Manu is not an advocate of the unrestrained arbitrary power of the king.[2] He does not stand for any oppression because that would be the negation of the purpose for which kingship was instituted. According to the Manusmriti a king who protects people in accordance with Dharma and smites those who are fit for corporeal punishment is really performing immense sacrifices daily. But the king who does not afford protection and yet takes his share in taxes, tolls, duties and fines will soon sink into hell. Furthermore, the king who does not afford protection and yet receives the sixth part of the produce takes upon himself all the foulness of his whole people (सर्वलोकस्य समग्रमलहारकम्). A king who transgresses the established conventions, who is an atheist and rapacious, who does not protect his subjects but devours them, will sink low (अधोगतिम्). Manu is emphatic in stating that the internal harmony and security of the kingdom must be maintained. Hence he says that the king in whose kingdom robbers and murderers imperil the lives of people is no better than being dead.[3] Like Kautilya, Manu is an advocate of restraint and discipline as the foundations of power. He cites the examples of various kings who perished because they were not perfectly restrained[1] and warns the kings against oppression of subjects. "That king who through folly rashly oppresses his kingdom, (will), together with his relatives, ere long be deprived of his life and of his kingdom. As the lives of living creatures are destroyed by tormenting their bodies, even so the lives of kings are destroyed by their oppressing their kingdoms."[2] Sarkar regards these verses as involving "an unequivocal enunciation of the doctrine of resistance, i.e., of the rights of the people against the king."[3] But we do not find in Manu, or for that matter in any Hindu theorist, the concept of political and civil rights of the people. This does not imply that historically speaking people were being always tyrannized and oppressed by the kings.[4] What we are asserting is only that there was no conceptual formulation of the notion of rights against somebody or of rights versus duty. According to the Hindu theory, as we have discussed in detail earlier, the notion of Dharma comprehended the basic ideas involved in the concepts of rights and duties and freedom, but the Hindu way of conceptualization is totally different from the modern way. We fail to see in this passage from Manu, any specific formulation of the theory of resistance. Interpreting and commenting upon the earlier verse, Medhatithi says that the king who has lost the affection of the people is killed by some bold persons who do not care for their lives.[5] Manu, as appears from the Sanskrit text, is making a general statement that in case of oppression of the people, the king loses "his vital parts." But the does not make any assertion that in case of oppression the people or a group of them have a political right to organize and kill the king.

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[1] *Ibid.*, 9.

[2] According to Manusmriti Danda strikes down the king who transgresses the canons of Dharma, together with his relatives. Next it (Danda) afflicts his castles, his territories, the whole world together with the moveable and immovable creation, as well as the seers and the gods who on the failure of the sacrificial system ascend to the sky.

[3] Manusmriti, vii 143.

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1. *Ibid.*, 40-41.
2. *Ibid.*, 111-112.
3. Quoted in Ghoshal, *op cit.*, 188 n.
4. Mr. Elphinstone, *The History of India* (London, 1916), p 22, states : "He [The king] was subject, indeed, to no legal control by human authority ; and although he is threatened with punishment in one place (vii, 27-29), and spoken of as subject to fine in another, (viii, 336) ; yet no means are provided for enforcing these penalties and neither the councils nor the military chiefs appear to have possessed any constitutional power but what they derived from his will. He must, however, have been subject to the laws promulgated in the name of the Divinity, and the influence of the Brahmins, both with him and his people, would afford a strong support to the injunctions of the code."
5. Medhatithi, *op.cit.*

6. *THE SUKRANITI'S THEORY OF THE KING'S DIVINITY*

Sukra does not introduce any principle basically new but only expounds what has been said already in the Mahabharata and in the work of Manu. He also refers to the creation of the king out of the eternal particles of eight gods ; however, this creation is not made by Godhead as in Manu but by the force and energy of the austerity and penances of the king himself.[1] Sukra makes explicit the theme of the comparison of the functions of the king to those of the gods. When the Mahabharata and Manu make such comparisons they identify the king and the god. Sukra does not say like Manu that the king "becomes" a god but only states that he is like the gods. Like Indra the king is an expert in the collection of his own dues. As the wind (or god of wind) disseminates smell, so the king goads the people to good and bad actions. The sun dispels darkness and the king is the promulgator of Dharma and the destroyer of non-righteousness. Yama punishes people after death and the king punishes the doers of evil deeds. The king is pure like fire. Like Varuna the king nourishes the people with wealth. As the moon pleases people with its sweet rays so also the king pleases people with his good qualities and actions and he is as expert as Kubera (the god of wealth) in the preservation of a full treasury.[2] Sukra makes a comparison between the qualities of the king and the gods. Later on he is particularly emphatic on those qualities of the king which make him resemble the god of punishment and the god of wealth.[3] The implication is that the king is to be powerful and wealthy.

Besides elaborating upon the theme of qualitative and functional resemblance between the king and the gods,[4] Sukra also refers to the divinity of the king in another form. He refers to the king being "a form of Vishnu."[1] It is true, he does not expound this theme in detail but it is possible to detect the influence of the doctrine of the incarnation of God, which plays so prominent a part in later Hindu religion and mythology, upon Sukra's view.[2] No previous political thinker had ever referred to this notion of incarnation. It is also very true that Sukra does not mention the exact Sanskritic equivalent of the word 'incarnation'. But from the fact that he wrote in the post-epic age when the conception of the incarnation of God was fully developed, it is possible to say that Sukra has in mind the notion of the king being an incarnation of God. But this idea of the king as the incarnation of God should not be confused with the idea of the king being a representative or vicar of God.[3]

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[1] Sukranitisara, i, 71-72.

[2] *Ibid.*, 72-76.

[3] *Ibid.*, 77.

[4] Cf., the Egyptian view about the king's identity with various deities in a polytheistic religious structure ; Moret, *The Nile and Egyptian Civilization*, (London, 1927), p. 288 : 'Worship king Menmaat-Ra in your breast ! (The King) is the God Sa, (Knowledge, taste, satiety) who dwells in hearts, whose

True to his earlier view that the king is made out of the particles of gods, Sukra maintains that only that king who conforms to his Dharma is to be regarded as so created. He who oppresses the people and transgresses the commands of Dharma is really made out of the particles of demons. The latter goes to

eyes see into every breast. He is the God Ra whose rays make us see, who gives light to the Two Lands, more than the sun's disk (Aten). The king is the Ka ; his mouth is abundance : his being is creation. He is the God Khnum (who fashions) who fashions all flesh, the begetter who begets all men. He is the Goddess Bast who defends the two Lands. Whoever worships him is protected by his hand. (But) he is also the Godess Sekhmet (the lion-goddess who devours the enemies of Ra) to him who transgresses his commands."

1. *Ibid.*, ii, 212.

2. For the theory of incarnation, E. W. Hopkins, *The Great Epic of India* (New York, 1901), pp. 85-195 ; Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy*, 1, 480, 491, 544-546 ; R. G. Bhandarkar, *Vaisnavism, Saivism and Minor Religious Systems* (Strasgurg, 1913).

3. Concerning concrete historical practice, with reference to this question, cf., Sir Charles Eliot, *Hinduism and Buddhism*, i, 35-36 : "in India kings have never attained a national and representative position like the Emperors of China and Japan or even the Sultans of Turkey. They were never considered as the high priests of the land or a quasi-divine epitome of the national qualities : the people tended to regard them as powerful and almost superhuman beings, but somewhat divorced from the moral standard and ideals of their subjects. In early times there was indeed the idea of a universal Emperor, the Cakra vartin, analogous to the Messiah, but, by a characteristic turn of thought, he was thought of less as a deliverer than as a type of superman, recurring at intervals. But monarchs who even approximated to this type were rare."

hell.[1] Sukra mentions two ways of visiting punishment upon an oppressive king. First, he says that the gods kill a king who does not afford protection. Second, he says that if the king becomes an enemy of "good qualities, policy and power," he should be avoided by the people or possibly expelled. In his place the royal priest should install another prince of the same dynasty for the protection of the people, after obtaining the latter's approval.[2] This categorical affirmation of the repudiation of a king not devoted to Dharma shows that Sukra is not an advocate of arbitrary rule. But from this, one should not jump to the conclusion that "Sukra does not believe in a theory of divine right about the nature of the authority of the ruler."[3] It is perfectly true that Sukra does not mention the idea of the derivation of the rights of the king from God. As we have pointed out more than once, the Hindu thinkers do not talk in terms of rights and hence they have the ideas neither of legal, nor moral nor natural nor divine rights. ut Sukra does have a very definite idea of the divinity of the king because even if, for argument's sake, we would accept that his statements about the king being "another form of Vishnu," or about the functional resemblance between the king and the gods, are only analogical and metaphorical, we cannot do away with his very definite and exact statement that the king is made out of the particles of eight gods.[4]

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[1] Sukranitisara, i, 85-86, 35. Cf., Vishnusmriti: स्वधर्मपालयन्नादण्ड्यो नामास्ति राज्ञः ।

[2] *Ibid.*, ii, 274-276.

[3] S. V. Puntambekar, "Some Aspects of Shukra's Political Thought," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* (April-September, 1948), pp. 7-8.

[4] Benoy Sarkar is making gross exaggerations when he says : "Sukra wants us to understand that the king is great only from his station, but that as an individual he is just a mortal among mortals. The office of kingship, if at all, may be conceded to be sacred but not the person who happens to hold it. As a human being he is not distinct from other men. In order that the king can command awe and reverence of the people, he is therefore advised by the philosopher to be attended by his retinue of officers. Verily, the regal insignia and paraphernalia, the royal seal and not the king himself is the real sovereign." (p. 174, *Political Institutions and Theories*). Sarkar unsuccessfully tries to minimize the importance of the conception of the divinity of the king.

7. *HISTORICAL FACTORS FOR THE DIVINITY OF THE KING.*

The notion of the divinity of the king has a long history in India, from the Vedic days onwards. There is no definite and positive proof of the actual assertion of divinity by any king. Even Asoka was content with the modest title "devoted to", or "dear to the gods." From about the second century B. C. to the second century A.D., the north-west frontier of India was the scene of several foreign invasions by the Parthians, the Bactrians, the Scythians, the Yue-chis, etc.[1] After these invasions there occurs a change in the actual titles of the kings. Although these foreigners got acclimated and assimilated in India, still the culture and polity which is found in this period shows a mixture of foreign and Indian elements. Some of the kings coming from these foreign dynasties assumed high-sounding titles. Kanishka calls himself "son of god."[2] Gondopharnes, the Pahlava king, calls himself "consecrated to god."[3] This tradition continued even later and Samudragupta in the Allahabad inscription has been called a "mortal only in celebrating the rites and the observances of mankind (but otherwise) a god dwelling on the Earth," and in the Gaya copper-plate inscription a "like of the gods of Kubera, Varuna, Indra and Antaka in one.[4]"

Sinha has tried to analyze the historical factors behind the rise of the divinity of the kings, in the period from about the first century B.C., to the third century A.D., but he has ended in a great confusion and even contradicts himself. He says : "The tradition of state, that is, royal patronage or partisanship had its origin with Asoka, and it was only the extension of that tradition, which coloured the attitude of kings in this age. This partisanship of religion by the state ultimately raised the prestige of the state or of the symbol of the state, the king. In this matter, the tradition of the foreigners--the so-called barbarians, exercised powerful influence. And ultimately the result was the rise of the divine right of kings".[1] Here he assigns to the foreign kings the predominant share in "the rise of the divine right of kings," but only four pages later he forgets what he had said earlier and analyzes the notions of the divinity of the king as propounded in the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Manusmriti, in terms of the great intellectual attempt of Brahmanism "to invest the king's person with divine sanctity and his authority with a divine sanction" because both Brahmanism and the kings were allied in a great double attempt at the "expulsion or subjugation of the barbarians" and relieving "the pressure of Buddhism on Brahmanism."[2] Historically, the notion of the king's divinity goes back to the Vedas and the Brahmanas. We think that the later tendency, especially in the post-Mauryan era, to exalt the king to the status of the gods or even transcending gods is definitely a Buddhist heritage. Buddhism had very definitely lowered the status of the Vedic gods. The latter had absolutely no place in the Buddhist scheme of knowledge and Nirvana. The Buddhist literature contains allusions to the humiliations of the Vedic gods by Buddha. According to Buddhism a man who has the knowledge leading to Nirvana is higher than any god.[3] Later on Brahmanism adopted this idea from Buddhism. Once the idea was there that a man could transcend a god due to his austerity and knowledge, it was easy to state that a king could transcend the gods. One can find concrete proof for our statement in Sukra. Referring to a king devoted to his Dharma, Sukra says : "The gods are the servants of him by whom the austerities, which are equivalent to the performance of one's duty, are eternally increased, not to speak of the human beings on earth."[1]

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[1] The Mathura Inscription, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1924, p. 402, refers to the creation of Devakulas for kings during this period.

[2] Quoted in Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 238, देवपुत्र; The title देवपुत्र is comparable to the Chinese imperial designation 'son of Heaven'—*Tien-tze*, *Tien-tzu*.

[3] *Ibid.*, देवव्रत

[4] *Ibid.*, pp. 294-295.

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[1] *Ibid.*, p. 230.

[2] Sinha, *op. cit.*, p. 234.

[3] A. Weber, *Sitzungsberichte der Berliner Akademia der Wissenschaften*, 1897, 1, 594 ff.

8. *CONCLUSION AND REFLECTIONS*

In the Hindu speculations and theories about the divinity of the king we do not find any notion of the derivation of rights from a supreme Godhead. The Hindu theorists are interested in establishing the divinity or, as in the Ramayana, the super-divinity of the king. They advance various grounds for their statements. The divinity of the king may be due to the creation of the king out of the particles of gods, or entrance of the god into the body of the king or the king could be a "mental son" of god or he could have attained the status of a god by performing some great sacrifice. The Hindu thinkers also make a functional comparison between the king and the gods but they do not speak of the king being a special agent or representative of God or a mediator between man and nature or man and god.

Some reservations to the theoretical implications of the divinity of the king have been pointed out by several scholars.[2] Some scholars maintain that according to the Hindu notion the king was not a god but only a human god.[3] Probably by making this distinction they want to stress that the Hindu thinkers did not exalt the king to the full divine status. But much value cannot be placed upon this distinction as a detracting factor from the divinity of the king because the Ramayana states that the king transcends the gods and Sukra upholds the view that the gods are the servants of the king who is devoted to the increase of his Dharma. It is true that Sukra thinks that only the king who is devoted to Dharma is created out of the particles of gods. If he transgresses Dharma, he is made out of the particles of demons and goes to hell. It is also to be noticed that the view of Vamadeva about the killing of an oppressive king and the view of Sukra to the effect of avoiding or expelling a king not mindful of his functions would dilute the rigor of the divinity of the king.

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[1] Sukranitisara, i, 24.

[2] According to a later work, Chandeshavara's Rajnitiratnakara, the people also are called विष्णु-प्रजाविष्णुं साक्षिणं श्रावयेन्मुहुः । This would indicate a tradition that would have limited the theoritical claims of the king's divinity.

[3] Banneji, *op. Cit.*, p. 71, 71n. D. R. Bhandarkar, *Carmichael Lectures.*

We have seen that the philosophy of Karma had some important repercussions on the notions of the divinity of the king. The doctrine of Karma as an ubiquitous law of moral determinism affecting all living beings and hence necessarily including the king, prevented the birth of the notion of the king being responsible to God alone for his acts. He has certain vocations—Dharma of his own and failure in the proper performance of them would necessarily bring its own consequences. The philosophy of Karma accepts the inexorable efficacy of action. Every action must necessarily and inevitably produce its consequences. A sociology of kingship constructed on the foundations of this concept of Karma would refuse to accept that matters of politics are of special concern to the king and God. Since non-theistic systems of thought also accepted the concept of Karma, a broader operativeness was associated with it. Thus the concept of Karma would prevent the growth of royal pretension to power by the device of pleading responsibility to God. The consequences of actions were bound to take place even without the presiding authority of God. Moreover, the notion of Karma also prevented the development of any theory of the king being the special instrument for the concretisation of a divine mission. The law of Karma is highly democratic to the extent that it rejects any Hebraic or Calvinistic idea of special election or selection.[1] One is entrusted with the performance of only those tasks for which one's previous Karma has fitted him. Hence we see that the concept of Karma divested the theory of divine origin from any implication of (1) the king being an agent of God, or (2) the king being responsible to God alone for his actions.

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[1] Sometimes it is maintained that the concept of Karma is an ideological outgrowth fabricated by the holders of authority to provide a rational justification of their power. In this sense the concept of Karma is regarded as being a device to hide the power constellations of society by providing some sort of an opium to the suffering sections of society. I do not deny that at times in the course of India's history such perversions of the Karma doctrine have taken place. I also do not deny that sometimes the philosophy of Karma may be wrongly interpreted to justifiy a quietistic attitude of resignation. But nevertheless I see in this concept of Karma possibilities of immense sociological significance. The concept of Karma is emphatically opposed to any aristocratic pretension to special divine mission. It teaches that God does not shower special or unique

Concurrently the law of Karma made impossible any idea of non-resistance or passive obedience being divinely ordained, because every person has his scheme of particular Dharma enjoined and fixed in accordance with his specific caste and order in life. Hence in both the Manu and Prithu traditions of divine origin in the Mahabharata, the functions of the gods ended with the nomination or creation of a particular king. God did not prescribe passive obedience or absolute non-resistance to the political authority of the king. The people have their Dharmas. Obedience or resistance to the king is not prescribed as the universal Dharma of all people. In a specific situation the people would decide what do to and in the making of this decision three factors would play an important role. First, the concrete objective political situation. Second, the Dharma of the four castes and orders. Third, the actual mental configuration of the people determined by their past and present actions. The doctrine of Karma, by introducing the notion of spiritual sanctions which would be imposed even after death, considerably influenced the notion of the divinity of the king.[1] By emphasizing the notion that a man could even

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favors or blessings. This concept teaches the supremacy of constant ceaseless efforts and moral endeavours. Even the lowest sections do not have any ground of pessimism. The concept of Karma is highly democratic because it undermines the theological foundations of autocracy and oligarchy. The humblest must get up, gird up their loins and make efforts to attain the best status.

[1] Thus the concept of Karma had immense sociological and political consequences. Usually there is the chance that the theory of the divinity of the king may become the theoretical support of autocratic and irresponsible claims to power. The king being constituted of super-human stuff could claim to be the concentration of sacred power and thus could exalt his authority. But the philosophy of Karma neutralised the foundations of such claims. Everybody was bound by the iron chain of necessity of Karma. The king in spite of all claims to divinity and majesty could not transcend the might and potency of Karma. He had his own svadharma to perform and for that he would be accountable to the sovereign efficacy of Karma. Hence apart from the external influences and consequences that could

transcend the gods by virtue of his noble and spiritually-oriented actions, the doctrine of Karma was a powerful factor repudiating the idea of any fundamental qualitative distinction between divinity and humanity.

flow from the impact of his actions, the king remained firmly bound, according to the Hindu theory, to the operative power of Karma and this universal power could make itself felt even after death.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has been devoted to a philosophical analysis of some of the fundamental political ideas of the ancient Hindus. We have started with the Rigveda and ended with the Manusmriti. It was essential to make a detailed investigation of concepts like Danda—punishment, Artha—wealth and Dharma—way of life, for getting an insight into the problems and the answers in the realm of ancient political thought in India. The second and third chapters are devoted to this type of conceptual study. The fourth and fifth chapters analyze the Hindu notions of kingship. In spite of the prevalence of republican polities in India, political thought for the most part is concerned with the monarchical form of government.

This study has shown the importance of the intensive investigation of the metaphysical foundations of Hindu political and social thought. The Hindu notions about the philosophy of Karma are important for understanding the particular trend of political and social thought in ancient India. The metaphysical justification of righteous warfare—Dharmayuddha—in the Gita by the arguments of the Vedantic and Samkhya philosophy is one of the most important chapters in Hindu political thought which had not been analyzed so far in a work on political philosophy. We get interesting speculations about the primeval social times in the Mahabharata which uses the Samkhya psychology for depicting the process of decline from the blessed state of the universal prevalence of Dharma. The political philosophy of Asoka shows the vast influence of Buddhist metaphysics and ethics on his notions of kingly authority and renunciation of warfare.

This study demonstrates the methodological necessity of analyzing the political philosophy of the Hindus in terms of their basic political concepts and broad philosophical assumptions. The introduction of conceptual dichotomies borrowed from a non-Hindu political system only confuses the problems and we do not get beyond the stage of superficial generalizations. *Our studies have shown that the precise legal concepts of state, sovereignty and right were absent in ancient Hindu thought.*

We have seen that according to the Hindu theorists political power has been always conceived to be a means. Wealth and power are important values but spiritual realization and self-contemplation stand higher. Hindu writers always stress that force should not be the basis of political power but that the latter should have its foundations in discipline, self-restraint and the performance of the function for which power has been instituted. The view that the ancient Hindus gave primacy to spiritual values over political goals is demonstrated in the philosophy of Hindu social structure where the Brahmins—the people of knowledge and renunciation—are placed in a higher rank than the Kshatriyas—the political people and the fighters.[1]

But in spite of profound philosophical and psychological investigations we do feel that in the realm of political thought proper the ancient Hindus did not produce any magnificent work.[2] The Hindu thinkers did not concern themselves with the analysis of the significant problems of political philosophy at an advanced theoretical level. Their analysis of the fundamental concepts of political theory and public law is also not very penetrating and profound. Their main aim was to categorize the duties of the king and to prescribe to him pragmatic rules for political and imperialistic success. Even the Arthasastra of Kautilya does not make any monumental contribution in the field of political philosophy. Its basic importance lies in being a systematic work on the theory of public administration. Adopting the terminology of German political scientists we can say that the ancient Hindu thinkers concentrated on *Staatskunst* and not on *Staatswissenschaft*. Kautilya did not have a single important successor. Creative political thinking almost died with him, except for some contributions from the Mahabharata.[1] Perhaps the Brahmanical dogmatism which created and propagated the myth that whatever is worth knowing is already contained in the Vedas and the only important thing is to put the Vedic ideas in practice was responsible for the conservatism and scholasticism which we find in post-Kautilyan political thought. It is also true that the metaphysics of Karma and Dharma make impossible the emergence of certain political problems like the individual versus the state, or politics versus ethics, or the conception of the political responsibility and accountability of the king to the people.

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[1] Cf. Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, ii, 353-54 : "It was in conformity, again, with the Indian world-feeling that lost itself in measureless infinity that the priest-class there became a second nobility, which with immense power, intruding upon every sort of life, planted itself between the people and and its wilderness of gods. The contradiction between being and waking-being that exists in every microcosm necessarily drives the two Estates against one another. Time seeks to absorb and subordinate Space, Space Time. In India the conception of space as infinite-indefinite requried a primacy of the priesthood."

[2] N. N. Law, *Studies in Indian History and Culture* (London, 1925), 384-418, gives a long but unimpressive list of "Available Manuscripts on Varta or its Sub-Topics", "Available Manuscripts on Polity or its sub-topics" and "Printed works on Polity or its Sub-topics."

But still we have found that there is a fundamental spiritual and moral note in Hindu thought which is surpassing in its proclamation of the sacred character of the individual human personality.[2] The fundamental theme of Hindu philosophical speculation is the spiritual nature of man. Man is not the materialistic-vitalistic agglomeration of physical and chemical elements or the temporary embodiment of a blind force. In his inmost essence man is a divine spark. This conception of the dignity and sanctity of the human soul was a cardinal tenet even of those political writers who taught a realistic aggrandizement of political power or preached the divinity of the king. The idea that the human spirit is fundamental and for its realization all social and political allurements and fears are to be transcended (आत्मार्थे पृथिवीं त्यजेत्) is a very significant ingredient of Hindu social psychology. The superiority of the spirit to all the established engines of political power is a cardinal tenet which has always evoked the greatest adherence in India. This theory of the immensity and importance of the spirit in comparison to political and social claims is the real antidote to political assertiveness and power. This emphasis on sipirituality and morality in Hindu political thought is a great contribution to world political thought. It is this aspect of Hindu thought that has been emphasised in modern times in the writings of Dayananda, Vivekananda, Tilak, Aurobindo and Mahatma Gandhi.

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[1] An exaggerated estimate of the Hindu achievements in theoretical politics is made by R.C. Majumdar, *Outline of Ancient Indian History and Civilization* (Calcutta, 1937), p. 160 : "We learn from these books [the Arthasastra etc.] that the Hindus cultivated the science of politics with an ardour and enthusiasm which has no parallel in the ancient world." But first, we have to distinguish between the science of politics and the science of administration. Secondly, even a superficial study of Plato's *Republic* and the *Laws* would dispel the nationalistic myth of Indian superiority in the realm of theoretical political science. In the field of the conceptual, analytical and philosophical study of the problems of political theory the ancient Hindus did not make any significant contribution. They specialized in the art of inculcating precepts and maxims for poltical success. In a free India we have to study things scientifically and get rid of the old emotional orientation developed as a reaction against western scientific chauvinism.

[2] अयमात्माब्रह्म । तत्त्वमसि श्वेतकेतो ।

ईश्वरः सर्वभूतानां हृद्देशेऽर्जुन तिष्ठति ।

The above statement does not refer to the type of individualism which we find in Hobbes, Locke, Smith, Ricardo or Spencer. Nor is there any suggestion that it is comparable to the anti-theocentric humanism which begins with the Renaissance, is developed by Goethe and Herder and begins to distintegrate with the rise of German *machtpolitik* and the collective societarianism of modern socialism. What I mean is that according to Hindu political philosophy, the individual is not a mere mechanistic agglomeration of materialistic elements but is the Atman which can participate not only in the physical, vital and mental consciousness but can also ascend to cosmic tand transcendental cognitional heights.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

THE SOCIOLOGY OF EARLY BUDDHIST ETHICS

1. *EVOLUTION OF MORAL IDEAS IN INDIA*

Howsoever based on intuitive perceptions and experiences and transcendentally-oriented a system of ethical philosophy might be, it has some social foundations and social implications. How much soever a man might try, he cannot remove himself from the organic structure of society. It is true that Buddha received enlightenment under the Bodhi tree as a result of mighty austerities and deep contemplations but he had flourished amidst a social, economic and political context whose conscious and unconscious influences were cast on his personality and thought. A great man represents the explicit flowering of the dominant forces of his particular age. The insistent and compulsive urgency with which the problem of pain and suffering represented itself to the sensitive mind of Buddha was a consequence of the social ethos and spirit of that age which was pulsating with pessimism and monasticism and of that society in which wandering preachers were many. Buddha himself was conscious that his teachings were bound to have social influences. The Dhammapada says: "A supernatural person (a Buddha) is not easily found, he is not born everywhere. Wherever such a sage is born, that race prospers."[1] In the process of acquiring an institutional framework ethical teachings more and more demonstrate their social influence. The teachings of Buddha, although oriented to the acquisition of final emancipation from misery, have, in the course of Indian history, cast profound social influences. A sociological study of early Buddhist ethics receives added justification today when responsible leaders of peoples and nations are saying that the Buddhist concepts of *avaira* and *maitri* can alone save humanity from the threatening holocaust and catastrophe. Mahatma Gandhi's political success in modern India is an additional substantiation of the view that the Buddhist ethics of *ahimsa* did have social and political implications. The movement of Gandhi was a vindication of the practial applicability of the Buddhist concept of non-violence on a national political scale. Hence it is essential that a sociological study of Buddhist ethics should be undertaken. In the west, Westermarck, Max Weber, L. T. Hobhouse, Durkheim, Albion Small, Pitirim Sorokin and others have undertaken significant steps in the development of a sociological study of religious and ethical ideas. I propose to undertake a sociological study of early Buddhist ethics and to discuss not only the social origins of the ethical ideas but also the implications of those ideas for the social structure.

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[1]. Dhammapada, XIV, 193.

If Buddhist ethics stressed the development of moral rectitude and uprightness for the growth of meditative self-concentration and contemplative insight, still it had a social aspect in the sense that the Buddhist Bhikshu had to lead his austere life in the Samgha. He was not residing in complete isolation. Even if he could for some time live in a cave or some riverside retreat, he had to come in touch with people for his food and other needs and cares of his physical self. The Samgha was a type of a religious conmmunity and the deep affectual bonds of a primary group had their operation there. The Theragatha refers to the ethics of brotherliness in the Samgha :

"Behold the company who learn of him—
In happy concord of fraternity . . .
The noblest homage this to Buddhas paid."

The Samgha provided an institutional basis to the ethical life of the Buddhist monks. It provided an atmosphere of the direct and indirect suggestion of the primacy of moral values. The individual desire to lead a moral life thus received reinforcement and intensification because of the existence of a social fraternity. The individual monk was a cell in the organic confraternity of the Samgha. The teachers and saints who were advanced in the moral and meditative path were the loci of sympathetic radiation. They encouraged the initiates in the path of the redemption of the sins and sorrows of the world. The senior monks had attached to them the prestige and social status associated with age, wisdom and holy living. Thus it is possible to state that although the members of the Samgha had made a deliberate withdrawal from the great society, the formation and organisational structure of the Samgha tended to give a social and collective appearance to the dominant ethical norms to which the members had taken a vow. Thus the Samgha tended to give even to moral and meditative life the impress and cast of associational existence. It made possible a group life in quest of moral and virtuous activity and meditation.

The great religions of the world ascribe a superhuman origin to their ethical conceptions. The religious leader is regarded as only the medium through whom the divine being reveals the moral and sacred path. This tendency to ascribe a superhuman origin to their teachings and conceptions is an aspect of the dominant trend of world-religions to obtain adherence and following by claiming a super-social source for their theology and ethics. There is no explicit recognition of any superior divine agency in Buddhism. Nevertheless, Buddhists believe that the great truths dawned on Buddha in a superintellectual stage of deep absorption. Hence Buddhism in spite of the non-acceptance of a theistic agency ascribes an intuitional if not a revelatory origin to its moral ideas.

But we find that several non-intuitional sources have contributed to the growth of the Buddhistic ethical ideas. Early Buddhists believed that if one had developed the sentiment of universal all-comprehensive compassion (*maitri*) then one could obtain the capacity to tame not only robbers and enemies but even wild animals. Buddha is able to subdue the great furious elephant Nalagiri by the force of compassion. The Jataka tales depict the early lives of Buddha, prior to the attainment of final Buddhahood and they state that the Buddhisat used to live in perfect amity with even furious animals. This is another illustration of the operative force of compassion. From the sociological standpoint it is an illustration of the magical potency of ethical virtue. It is possible to see behind such beliefs the heritage of old pre-historic magical conceptions which ascribed power and potency to the chief and the sorcerer. The Atharvaveda is a great storehouse of such magical beliefs and elements. In Buddhist literature also we find innumerable instances referring to the acquisition of supernormal powers by Buddha consequent upon the growth of enlightenment. Hence the primitive connexion between magic and ethics is to some extent retained in Buddhism. The magical potency which in olden times was supposed to adhere to the chief is now transferred to the Arhat and the Buddha.

Besides revelation and magic, there is a third source for the growth of moral ideas and that is pragmatic consideration for social adjustment and welfare. Every individual has in him the egoistic propensity to self-presevation. But the equally operative tendency of egoistic self-presevation of all individuals can lead to a regime of anarchy and chaos, if there are not rules of adjustment to settle conflicts. In the processes of social accommodation, adaptation and adjustment, there is the evolution of socio-moral rules. The great concept of Ahimsa must have evolved as a remedy to solve tribal tensions and group struggles. In the later processes of intellectual refinement, these socio-moral rules of adjustment are given an idealistic appearance. This idealistic colour is essential to instil in people a feeling of attachment for and obligation to the moral rules. The rigors of social penalization and external constraint are also employed to obtain conformity to these idealistically coloured moral rules to the extent that adherence to them is regarded essential for cohesion. *Asteya* or non-thieving is a great moral notion but since its maintenance is vitally essential for social preservation, hence the agency of constraint is taken recourse to for its application. Thus it is possible to maintain that the problems of social adjustment have also contributed to the evolution of moral ideas.

But it has to be borne in mind that this desire for social cohesion does not explain the total meaning and significance of ethics. The psychological growth of man also results in a chastening of his emotions. Thus we find the development of what Westermarck calls "moral emotions". According to him moral disapproval is a way of expressing individual resentment against a specific way of action and moral approval is a form of retributive sympathetic emotion.[1] The psychological growth of men leading to the emergence and flowering of moral emotions is not something mechanical. It is highly subjective. In the same society or even in the same family there may be persons of the most diverse temperaments. Early Buddhism accepts the concepts of *Karma* and *Samskara*. These have psychological foundations. The ethical orientations of men and their capacity to progress in the path of moral endeavours is determined by their past emotional heritage. Even the Buddha himself had to practise penances and austerities in several previous lives before he could attain the cognitive, volitional and emotional maturity which Buddhahood typifies. The concept of *Bhavana* or emotional apperception is lauded in early Buddhism as an ingredient for the attainment of truth. Thus we find that the emotional factor has also to be stressed in indicating the origin of moral ideas. *Therefore in studying the evolution and development of Buddhist moral ideas, these four factors have to be emphasized—intuition, magic, social adjustment and moral emotions.*

During the Vedic age ethical ideas were evolving. There was the dominant concept of *Rita*—the all-governing cosmic law which controlled the path and the destiny of gods and men. What was not Rita was *anrita* and the Vedic seers prayed for being led to the path of *satya*, in place of the path of *anrita*. There was great stress on moral virtues like *vrata* (vows), *diksa* (initiation into the moral way), *Sraddha* (faith) and *dana* (beneficence). Gifts were to be imparted not only to the sacrificial priests but to all the needy and the Rigveda categorically states that one who eats alone is eating sins. Varuna is the great upholder of the moral way—*dhritavrata*. Agni is also called the protector of vows—*Vratapati*. The Vedic gods and goddesses like Savita, Dyauh and Prithivi have also moral attributes applied to them. The fact that during the Vedic period there was an emphatic and explicit distinction between good and evil is clearly brought out in the opposed juxtaposition of *bhadra* (the noble and good) and *durita* (the evil or bad). The Vedas speak of the evils associated with the transgression of the divine law or the moral immanental law of *Rita*. These evils are regarded as *Vrijina*[1]. The god Varuna is regarded as the forgiver of sins and evil. There is an advanced notion of ethical evolution involved in the idea that Varuna knows the motives of men. The Rigveda also accepts the distinction between moral sin and sacrificial sin. The latter refers to a violation of the exact methodology of the sacrificial mechanism, while the former involves a reference to the violation of the laws of human conduct. The Vedas indicate the social aspect of morality in the condemnation of sorcery, seduction, adultery, witchcraft and gambling. The concept of *dana* (gifts) has a foremost place and in the Rigveda we find mention of gifts without involving any mediation of the gods. This forestalls the Buddhist ethic of beneficence. During the age of the Brahmanas there was the development of an elaborate complicated sacrificial ritualism. There was the growth of the idea of the three-fold debts—to the manes, to the gods, and to the seers, which a man has to redeem. A great advance in moral conception during the period was indicated in the stress on the confession of evil deeds.

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[1] Westermarck, *The Origin and Evolution Moral Ideas.* II, pp. 738-741.

The fundamental theme of the Upanishads is the metaphysical all-pervasiveness and inclusive immanence of the supreme spirit. The cosmic self is identical with the psychic essence in its inmost being. The cosmic Brahman is also transcendent. It has been said that since the human being can realize his identity with the absolute by cognitive contemplation and since the supreme being is beyond the application of the criteria of good and evil, hence the Upanishads teach a transcendent supermoralism. But the Upanishads stress the ethical path both as a preparatory discipline for the acquisition of supreme knowledge and as a natural consequence of spiritual gnosis. The Mundakopanishad points out that supreme knowledge cannot be attained without rigorous conformity to the moral path. The Kathopanishad also stresses the moral disciplines as a preparation for the attainment of the liberating knowledge. The Brihadaranyaka Upanishad also stresses beneficence and asceticism. The Taittiriya Upanishad gives us categorical imperatives of the virtues essential for a householder. The Chhandogya gives us the ethic of the Three D's—beneficence (*dana*), self-restraint (*daman*) and kindness (*daya*). It has been sometimes stated that the Upanishads inculcate the despotic imperialism of the man of knowledge in the ethical realm because they teach the irrelevance of ethical canons for the man of knowledge or *jnani*. Melamed says that ethics receives its justification in the tension between God and man and since the Upanishads teach pantheistic immanence hence there is no place for the imperativeness of the ethical norm for the man who has obtained the final knowledge of the spirit. It is true that the Upanishads teach the identity of the *Brahman* and the human soul but this type of spiritual realization leads to the growth of an attitude of moral identification with the entire order of living beings. The realized saint develops an attitude or equality and philosophic equanimity. Nevertheless, it is correct that the conception that the man of knowledge goes beyond the applicability of the criteria of sin and merit is at least formulated in a fashion which can have socially damaging implications. At times this ideal can be exploited by hypocrites. From the standpoint of social cohesion and organization what we need is the inculcation of absolutism of moral virtues. It is certainly true that the absolute spirit is not touched by the criteria of morals evolved by human beings at a certain time and place. But no embodied human being can ever concretely attain complete identity with the supreme spirit. How much soever his spirit might be developed and enlightened, so long as the seer is physically alive he is faced with problems of social adjustment. Even when he is dead it is society that takes care of his dead body. Hence the complete immersion in the absolute even if possible on a purely mental and philosophical plane, can never be a concrete total actuality. Although in modern times Vivekananda, Ram Tirtha, Lokamanya Tilak and Aurobindo Ghosh have tried to defend the Upanishadic metaphysics from the charge of ethical irrelevance, I consider that the Upanishadic ethical code is not happily phrased from the social standpoint. If it is imperative to preserve society and to better it, then for no human being, regardless of his saintly and spiritual acquisitions, can the prescription of the canon of ethical irrelevance be permitted. Wheresoever the saint comes in conflict with the accepted canons and criteria of citizenship, he should be adequately dealt with by the established institutions.

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[1] The Atharvaveda, xi, 8 19 and vi, 26, refers to *Papman* or an impersonal evil.

2. *THE SOCIOLOGY OF EARLY BUDDHIST ETHICS*

The ethics of Buddhism preaches a middle way between the extremes of sensuous appetitive hedonism and utter and absolute self-abnegation and asceticism. This middle way is categorized as the eightfold moral way—the *Arya Ashtangika Marga*. But although Buddhist ethics avoids the extreme concepts of chastisement and penalization of the body associated with the teachings of the Jains, the monkish ethics of Buddhism is definitely and pronouncedly ascetic and rigorous from any utilitarian and eudaemonistic standpoint. However, Buddha showed great courage of spirit in denouncing the grosser and harsher forms of asceticism. He claims that he had taught a moral way that is noble and oriented to the realization of the supreme enlightenment. There are eight great concepts in his moral way—right opinions (*Samyak Drishti*), right aspirations or volition (*Samyak Samkalpa*), right speech (*Smayak Vak*), right actions (*Samyak Karmanta*), right means of livelihood (*Samyak Ajiva*), right efforts (*Samyak Vyayama*), right mindfulness (*Samyak Smriti*), and right contemplation (*Samyak Samadhi*).

Right opinions refer to the acceptance of correct metaphysical views. Although Buddhism is silent about transcendental metaphysics, nonetheless it prescribes certain metaphysical schemes of the origination and extinction of suffering. The formula of Pratityasamutpada is one such illustration. This stress on right opinions shows that according to Buddha, ethical norms cannot have mere pragmatic foundations. They should be rooted in the apperception of some fundamental truths. The sanction of ethics in early Buddhism lies not in the existence of a mechanism of external social and political constraint but in the sovereign imperative of the perception of the pervasiveness of sorrow and pain in the world. If moral rules are regarded as rooted only in the cult of individual expediency, then it is possible that men may like to exploit the world to the maximum. The only bar to immoral action in that case is the fear of detection and punishment. But the criterion of morality according to Buddhism lies in the growth of an inner sense of the necessity of virtue in a world where all consituted creature are equally governed by the inexorable law of sorrow and pain. Hence the community of suffering-fraught populace must traverse the moral way.[1]

Right aspirations are also essential. They are needed for the growth of renunciation, benevolence and kindness to all living beings. The stress on right aspiration and volitions indicates the inwardization of morality in Buddhism. The Dhammapada says : "All that we are is the result of what we have thought, it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts. If a man speaks or acts with an evil thought pain follows him, as the wheel follows the foot of the ox that draws the carriage. If a man speaks or acts with a pure thought, happiness follows him, like a shadow that never leaves him."[2] The emphasis on right aspirations is an important advance in the direction of ethical intuitionism. It is an attempt to found the roots of morality in the chastened conscience of man. As Socrates and Plato preached against the external conventionalism and pragmatism of Cephalus, Polemarchus and Glaucon, so also in place of the traditional ritualism of the Brahmanas and the formal asceticism of the wandering teachers, Buddha heralded the application of inner reason and volition to moral life. He taught the ennoblement and purification of human intentions. This concept of right aspirations has great social implications. Modern psychologists are trying to examine the emotional foundationals of tribal, social and national conflicts and they also advocate some kind of psychological integration and remaking of man. If our aspirations are right not only can social tension and international conflicts be resolved but we can build a better and happier world. It is true that in the framework of Buddhist ethics right aspiration was oriented to the cultivation of those sentiments which could lead to the realization of the state of Nirvana, still socially beneficial sentiments are not excluded from its purview. "It is longing for aspiration ; the hope to live in love with all ; the aspiration of true humanity."

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[1] Cf. Dhammapada 1, 7, "The world does not know that we must all come to an end here; but those who know it their quarrels cease at once."

[2] Dhammapada, 1 and 2.

Right speech is cultivated by abstaining from lying, calumination, abuse and fruitless conversation. An aspirant must abstain from back-biting and from harsh language. A good deal of social conflict is generated by the absence of restraint over use of language. The avoidance of harsh language leads not only to the growth of inner peace but it is a solid virtue which imparts social esteem and prestige. The great success of Buddha, Christ and Gandhi was in part a consequence of their use of sweet and soothing language. We have to beware of confusing strength of character with offensive speech.

Buddha lays the greatest emphasis on right deeds. Righ actions lead to the formation of virtuous character.

"According to the seed that's sown
So is the fruit ye reap therefrom.
Doer of good will gather good
Doer of evil, evil reaps.
Sown is the seed, and thou shall taste
The fruit thereof."

Buddha repudiates the concept of a substantial soul monad but he was committed to the conception of the causal operativeness of the acts performed. "To say one (person) acts, another reaps the fruits of those acts is not true. And to say : one and the same both acts and is affected by the result is not true." Hence although there is no concept of the soul as an unchanging spiritual being, nevertheless we find in Buddhism the concept of the continuity of character and personality. According to Buddhism it is essential to perform right deeds because they lead to the formation of the right type of character. Right actions involve abstention from destruction of life. It is essential not to grasp and take what is not given to one and the concept of purity is also extremely essential. "He who destroys life, who speaks untruth, who in this world takes what is not given him...even in this world digs up his own root."[1] In Buddhism we find the distinction between good actions and bad actions.[2] Good actions are characterized by the absence of covetousness, jealousy and delusion (*alobha, advesha* and *amoha*). Hence only he can perform right actions who has conquered the lower passions and is free from the desires and illusions of the ego. Egoism is the cardinal evil because it generates false attachments and perversities. Good actions have two supreme consequences. They lead to the realization of the supreme goal of final extinction of all pain, evil and sorrow. This is their individual aspect. They also lead to the welfare and good of other human beings. This is their social aspect. It is true that in early Buddhism the physiological and psychological aspects of actions have been emphasized because it is a religion of redemption but the social aspects of action are not altogether neglected. If good works are performed then social adaptation and harmonious functional adjustments are bound to result. But the concrete performance of good works is a very difficult enterprise because it is the resultant of diverse factors. Modern

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1. Dhammapada, 246 and 247.

2. Rhys Davids, *Hibbert Lectures on the History of Buddhism*, pp. 65-66; Max Muller, *Anthropological Religion*, p. 301.

science stresses the concept of heredity which has a significant role to play in the development of character and personality which are the efficient causes of good actions but according to the Buddhist theory the parents and the family through whom and in which a person is born are also determined by his own actions. A second significant force for the concrete eventuation of good works is the compulsive mechanism and demand of the physiological and psychological structure of man. There are some actions whose performance is impelled by this physiological and psychological structure. This structure is built up by the accumulated heritage and impressions of the actions of past lives. It leads to the generation of *samskara* which constitutes the uniqueness of individual human nature. There are also some social factors which are operative. Education is such a factor. There may be certain ideals which are significant in some societies. They also exercise a moulding influence. The specific environmental situation wherein certain actions are to be performed is also an important factor to be reckoned with. The interaction between the psycho-physical organism of the individual and the social ideals takes place in a definite situational field. Thus it is clear that in a sociological study of the concept of right actions we cannot be content with only a psychological analysis of the individual personality. The situational field and the dominant social ideals cannot be denied their role. It is very true that the supreme quest for a Buddhist was the attainment of the way of emancipation. But this perfectionist quest, in order to become interiorized in the human psyche and to be operative as a force of purposive propulsion towards the acceptance of the Buddhist way, had to become socially expressed. Ideas do not have a ghost-like existence in space and time. Before ideas can become operative forces they need some form of social habitation in the minds of men. Hence, in a sociological study of the concept of action this social side constituted by the group adherence to some ideals and the physical and social environmental field of operation should be taken into consideration.

The concept of right livelihood has pronouncedly a sociological orientation. "Life is easy to live for a man who is without shame, a crow hero, a mischief-maker, an insulting, bold and wretched fellow. But life is hard to live for a modest man, who always looks for what is pure, who is distinterested, quiet, spotless, and intelligent."[1] The concept of right livelihood excluded many kinds of mean and vulgar activities. It can have diverse social implications. Aristotle condemned large-scale trade, monopolies and the use of money as capital. He called them to be unnatural chrematistic activities as distinguished from natural finance which is to foster moral living. The Buddhist concept of right livelihood will also include a condemnation of unsocial economic operations. If we were to stress the economic implications of this concept, it will help us in substituting the profit motivation of modern bourgeois industrial economy by the motivation of service. The economic ethics of Buddhism is opposed to the Ricardian individualistic notions of the self-interest of man and the maximization of returns as morally valid criteria of economic action. It refuses to consider the realm of business as a separate compartment of life which has its own professional ethics, different from the ethics of the other departments. According to Buddhism life is one intergral whole and ethical norms have universal sway. The Buddhist ethical way conceives of right living as a preparation for right concentration and meditation and hence according to Buddhism economic activities have only an instrumental reality. They are at best means. Economics does not assume the structure of a preponderant substantive reality in Buddhist ethical philosophy. Economic action, according to Buddhism, is a means and it has to be moralized in order that it may lead to the attainment of Nirvana which is the supreme vocation. The idea of the moralization of economic activities is brought out in this statement of the Sutta Nipata : "Those who in this world are wicked, and such as do not pay their debts, are slanderers, false in their dealings, counterfeiters, those who in this world being the lowest of men commit sin."[1] Although according to the scheme of the eightfold way, the concept of *Samyak Ajiva* is oriented to the ethics of the ascetic seeking the goal of emancipation, still it is possible to extend the sphere of its operation.[2] Thus the ideal depicted in the Sutta Nipata : "Waiting on mother and father, protecting child and wife, *and a quiet calling*, this is the highest blessing. Giving alms, living religiously, protecting relatives, blameless deeds, this is the highest blessing"[3]—would be in consonance with the concept of right living.

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[1] Dhammapada, XVIII, 244-245.

Right efforts imply a systematic psychological training. They imply the suppression of the rising of evil states and the eradication of those evil states which have already arisen. They also include the stimulation of good states and the perfection of those which have come into being. *Samyak Vyayama*, thus we see, is definitely a psychological and moral scheme of training and it has no affinity with the Platonic and Aristotelian notions regarding gymnastic.

Right mindfulness indicates the constant mental presence of the dominant goals of existence. It is opposed to any inertia and lethargy with regard to the supreme quest of Nirvana. It implies a conquest of all kinds of false cravings and hankerings. It stresses a strenuous desire to overcome dejection. The aspirant has to train his body and mind in such a way as he will be ardent, self-possessed and mindful. "The disciples of Gotama are always well awake and their thoughts day and night are always set on Buddha, on the law, on the samgha, on their body, in compassion and in meditation." The operations of death are inexorable and hence it is essential that immediate efforts would be made to attain knowledge. The Dhammapada says :

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[1] Sutta Nipata, "Amagandhasutta", 245.

[2] Cf. *Buddhist Suttas* p. 189 ; "He abstains from the getting of silver or gold. He abstains from the getting of bondmen or bond women. He abstains from buying and selling. He abstains from tricks with false weights, alloyed metals, or false measures. He abstains from bribery, cheating, fraud and crooked ways. He refrains from maiming, killing, imprisoning, highway robbery, plundering villages, or obtaining money by threats of violence." These are the principles for the guidance of the conduct of a Buddhist.

[3] Sutta Nipata, 261-262.

"Death carries off a man who is gathering flowers and whose mind is distracted, as a flood carries off a sleeping village."[1] "Well-makers lead the water (wherever they like) ; fletchers bend the arrow ; carpenters bend a log of wood ; wise people fashion themselves."[2] Hence it is essential to cultivate the path of earnestness leading to immortality, because thoughlessness is the path of death. The Buddhist concept of *Apramada* has been differently interpreted. Fausboll translates it by 'vigilantia', Childres by 'diligene', and Max Müller by 'earnestness'. It is an essential supplement to the concept of right mindfulness.

Right contemplation is the culmination of the ethical process. Morality, according to Buddhism, receives its consummation in the attainment of the serene concentration of the mind. *Samyak Samadhi* stresses inward cognition and reflective abstraction. *Samadhi* is a state of mind consequent upon deep meditation. According to the Buddhist scheme there are four meditations which lead to the attainment of perfect concentration. The first *dhyana* results in the attainment of gladness and joy. The second *dhyana* leads to the attainment of elation and inner peace and silence. By the third *dhyana* a person is able to neutralize all his passions and false presuppositions and assumptions. The fourth and the final *dhyana* results in the attainment of perfect tranquility and self-realization. Hence the Dhammapada says : "The Bhikshu who acts with kindness, who is calm in the doctrine of Buddha, will reach the quiet place (Nirvana), cessation of natural desires and happiness. O Bhikshu, empty this boat ! if emptied, it will go quickly ; having cut off passion and hatred, thoug wilt go to Nirvana...Meditate, O Bhikshu, and be not heedless ! Do not direct thy thought to what gives pleasure, that thou mayest not for thy heedlessness have to swallow the iron ball (in hell), and thou mayest not cry out when burning, 'This is pain.' Without knowledge there is no meditation, without meditation there is no knowledge : he who has knowledge and meditation is near into Nirvana."[3] *Samadhi* as obtained

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1. Dhammapada, 47-48.
2. *Ibid*, 80
3. Dhammapada, 363-372.

by the four levels of meditations is a state of deep absorption. It is the attainment of knowledge by identity with the great principles of truth and law. It goes beyond the conceptual cognition of thought. In a sense it transcends the Kantian conception of the free will willing the free will, because it is a process of unitive absorption in which both cognition and volition attain their maturest perfection. It is true that this perfection of concentration is highly personal and subjective in character. But even this self-contemplation has also a sociological side. The processes and technics of contemplation result in the development of an integrated and developed personality. The early Buddhist writings always refer to the delight and radiance that are spread over the face of a true disciple of Buddha. This kind of integrated personality is in itself a social gain. Modern social psychologists have made us aware of the dangerous explosions and conflicts which are the consequences of the frustrations, emotional deteriorations and psychoses of individuals. The schizophrenic or the divided personality is a great social problem. Hence if some person is able to attain a sense of delight, calm and happiness, he not only realizes a great personal goal but is rendering a great social service. His personality emits sparks of happiness and peace. Hence it is clear that the existence of such a personality has great social value. 'Whatever place a faithful, virtuous, celebrated...man chooses, there he is respected. Good people shine from afar, like the snow of mountains ; bad people are not seen, like arrows shot by night."[1] By stressing the notions of right mindfulness and contemplative concentration early Buddhism preached a deepening of the sense of morality. It provides an ethical teaching which inculcates profound purity and holiness.

The Aryan eightfold way is a signal contribution to the evolution of moral ideas. It removes the subject of ethics from the domain of supernaturalism and transcendentalism. It preaches a moral way in which the individual is required to conform to the path of ethics not out of the fear of an external agency. Morality has an inner source and impulsion and its efficacy lies in the purification of intentions. The Buddhist way is a comprehensive code and it preaches a way which leads to the integration of personality and the attainment of calm, peace and silence. But although not supernaturalistic in its foundations, there is an element of the a *priori* in Buddhist ethics. *Samadhi* and *Nirvana* are super-intellectual categories and we cannot obtain a rational analysis of them. They do involve at least an initial faith in their certainty before the aspirant can take up the path.

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[1] Dhammapada, "Miscellaneous," 15.

But although there is an element of the *a priori* in Buddhist ethics because it is oriented to the path of individual perfection and the attainment of *Nirvana*, the eightfold ethical way is calculated to promote the ongoing of the social process and structure. The adherence to the concepts of right speech, right actions and right means of livelihood introduces better community relations not only in the Buddhist Samgha but in the greater society with which the Bhikshus come in contact. The modern school of ethical sociology believes in the betterment of society and the maximization of satisfactions by the rational realization of human interests. Buddhists ethics, on the other hand, advocates the realization of social peace and communal fraternity by recourse to self-abnegation. There is no Fichtean conception of the perfection of society or of social justice in early Buddhism but the concept of right means of livelihood, if practised on a collective scale, can provide the basic value for solving the social and economic problems of an under-developed and poor country. In several countries we have seen the rapacities and plundering activities of industrialists who have brought havoc on society by mercilessly tampering with the social and natural resources. Hence modern economists are advocating the concept of conservation. If an extended social application is made of the Buddhist notions of right action and right means of livelihood we shall get that incorporation of the moral element in economic activity which is the dream of sociological economists and thinkers like Ruskin, Tolstoy and Tawney.

Sometimes it has been said that the Buddhist eightfold path is purely introspective and contemplative and is not adequately dynamic. It is true that the eightfold path is regarded significant because it culminates in the attainment of contemplation. But we should emphasize its dynamic character to the extent that it preaches an earnest and immediate application to the moral path. It should not be forgotten that the action-orientation of ethics is implicit in the very name *Marga*. Buddhist ethics is not a matter of acceptance but it emphasizes the leading of a moral life. Man can be saved not by blind belief and passive faith but by the dynamic adherence to the path of ethics.

Besides the Aryan eigthfold path, the early Buddhist scriptures refer to another ethical categorization—the four *Brahma Vihara*. *Maitri*, *Karuna*, *Mudita* and *Upeksha* constitute the four Brahma Viharas. They are also referred to in the Yoga Sutras of Patanjali and are possibly derived both by Buddhism and Patanjali from a common source. *Maitri* or *Metta* is one of the most important concepts of Buddhist ethics. It comprehends both non-hatred and loving kindness. Hatred does not cease by hatred, only non-hatred can overcome hatred. This, according to Buddha, is the eternal law. "Victory breeds hatred, for the conquered is unhappy. He who has given up both victory and defeat, he, the contented is happy." Buddha exhorts his disciples to live happily, not hating those who hate them. The wanderer who wants to attain final emancipation must practise non-violence. Hence the Udana says :—

"The whole wide world we traverse with our thought
Nor come on aught more dear to each than self.
Since aye so dear the self to other men,
Let the self-lover harm no other man."

According to Buddha he who strikes or insults others is not an anchorite. According to the Dhammapada one who inflicts pain on an innocent and harmless person meets with one of these ten states : "He will have cruel suffering, loss, injury of the body, heavy affliction or loss of mind, or a misfortune coming from the king, or a fearful accusation, or loss of relations, or destruction of treasures, orl ightning-fire will burn his houses, and when his body is destroyed, the fool will go to hell."[1] The social implications of non-hatred and non-resistance are obvious. The tremendous sociological orientation of Buddhist ethics and perhaps of the whole of Hindu ethics is clearly brought out in the immense moral and spiritual significance attaching to the concept of *ahimsa*.[2] *Ahimsa* is the signal way to attain fraternity and even identity with the entire realm of created beings. But Buddhism is not content only with the negative way of formulation. It preached the positive fullness of kindness. In profoundly moving utterances the Sutta Nipata declares :

> "Even as a mother watcheth o'er her child
> Her only child, as long as life doth last,
> So let us, for all creatures, great or small,
> Develop such a boundless heart and mind.
> Ay, let us practise love for all the world,
> Upward and downward, yonder, hence,
> Uncramped from ill will and enmity."[3]

The Buddhist believer is expected to be extremely solicitous for the well being and happiness of all creatures. "Whatever living beings there are, either feeble or strong, all either long or great, middle-sized, short, small or large, either seen or which are not seen, and which live far or near, either born or seeking birth, may all creatures be happy-minded." The Buddhist stress on kindness and love seeks to emphasize a notion which is essential both for social well-being and for Nirvana. The Itivuttaka says : "All the means that can be used as bases for doing right are not worth one sixteenth part of the emancipation of the heart through love. That takes all those up into itself, outshining them in radiance and in glory." This stress on the universality of compassion by Buddhism had great social consequences and it provided an exalted norm for action.

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1. Dhammapada, X, 137-140.
2. A. B. Keith, *The Religion and Philosophy of the Vedas and the Upanishads*, II, p. 476 ; "The doctrine of Ahimsa is one which has never even in India received full sanction." But Keith is referring to practice and not to the sociological implications of *ahimsa* on a theoretical level.
3. Sutta Nipata, "Mettasutta," 148-149.

In early Buddhist literature the cultivation of kindness and love is associated with the acquisition of magical powers. Even dumb animals and furious beasts are caught by the dynamic spark of *maitri* and become absolutely tame and follow the saint. Thus the superior efficacy of love is clear. From the sociological standpoint *maitri* is the supreme concept of social accommodation and adjustment because it profoundly transforms the character of the wicked and the violent. In the Jatakas we find numerous stories which indicate the transmutation of the concept of *maitri* into the dynamic principle of self-sacrifice for others. The Jatakas constantly reiterate the theme of self-sacrifice for the good of other beings. In the older ethical system of the Vedas and the Upanishads and the law-codes, kindness and sympathy were stressed but Buddhism excels Brahmanism in the immense emaphasis it puts, on love. From the sociological viewpoint *ahimsa* and *maitri* are principles of rational harmony and universal love. *Maitri* is a creative force of social development and it can safely act as a deterrant and counterpoise to the dissimilar and disharmonious forces of social tensions, contradictions and struggles. *Ahimsa* and *maitri* not only lead to the growth of internal harmony but they also result in the growth of spontaneous sympathy and a sense of dynamic identification with all living beings in their sorrow and suffering. Thus the cultivation of *ahimsa* and *maitri* can generate a sense of inner fraternity. This kind of brotherliness is needed in the growingly impersonal civilizations of the modern industrial world.

Several European critics have tried to distinguish the nonhatred and friendly sentiments inculcated in Buddhism from the stress on love in Christianity. According to Oldenberg, Buddhism emphasizes not the emotion of a world-embracing love but the peaceful feeling of friendly harmony. In the reiterated emphasis on the cultivation of universal *maitri*, Oldenberg finds "not the groundless enigmatic self-surrender of love, but rather intelligent reflection, the conviction that it is thus best for all and not least the expectation that the natural law of retribution will

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allot to such conduct the richest reward."[1] Schweitzer also has drawn a distinction between the Buddhist negativism of *ahimsa* and the active love of Christianity. From the standpoint of social psychology it is essential to distinguish between non-hatred and friendliness on the one side and positive love on the other. But two reservations have to be made. First, from the standpoint of social relations, the difference does not appear very substantial because even in the Sutta Nipata *maitri* has been illustrated by the boundless love of the mother for the child. Secondly, in the Jatakas we find numerous stories of the overflowing love of Buddha for all living creatures. Nevertheless, it seems correct to maintain that the supreme goal of the Buddhist is the realization of philosophic detachment and indifference while Christianity has stressed love for all human beings because all are children of the same providential Father. In the early Buddhist literature the reconciling and harmonizing power of *maitri* has been illustrated by the story of the son who forgave the assassin of his father even when the former had the ready weapon in his hand to finish the wicked assassin.[2] This story is a supreme illustration of the transforming power of *maitri* when it is sincerely accepted as a norm of action. But Keith is guilty of unnecessarily reading the Aristotelian concept of prudence (*phronesis*) in this greatly edifying tale. He says. "The element of calculating prudence is ever present."[3] Prudence is a cardinal concept in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* but it has no place in Buddhist morality.

Besides *Maitri* the theory of the four Brahma Viharas also stress *Karuna*. *Karuna* signifies a feeling of universal sympathetic identity with all living creatures. The Indian mind has always regarded Buddha as an embodiment of kind sympathy. *Mudita* or cheerfulness is also a moral category. Loving kindness, universal compassion and cheerfulness have great social functions and roles. They are oriented to the realization of a sense of fraternal identity which goes beyond the Greek concept of intelligent cooperative interdependence in a community (*Koinonia*). The life of Buddha typifies for all time the radical eradication of all socially disorganizing sentiments. The concepts of *maitri* and *karuna* can alone strengthen the foundations of any political and social group. The concept of self-interest alone is too much artifical and inadequate. *Maitri* and *karuna* are the foundations of universalistic solidarity. They replace the notions of reciprocity by the idea of universal compassion. The fourth category in the Brahma Viharas, *Upeksa*, is more individual in its orientation. It stresses the development of utter non-attachment to the ills, pains, pleasures and tragedies of the world. *Upeksha* is the characteristic of the man of vision, who refuses to be enchanted by the allurements of the evanescent world. The Sutta Nipata thus defines a calm Muni : "Without desire for pleasant things and not given to conceit, and being gentle, intelligent, not credulous, he is not displeased with anything. Not from love of gain does he learn, and he does not get angry on account of loss, and untroubled by desire he has no greed for sweet things. Equable (*upekha*), always thoughtful, he does not think himself equal to others in the world, nor distinguished, nor low : for him there are no desires (*Ussada*)." Hence the attribute of the monk is the cultivation of supreme indifference. It is clear that this indifference can be acquired only by years of prolonged concentration and mental austerities. The stress on indifference reveals the ascetic other-worldly orientation of Buddhist ethics.

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[1] H. Oldenberg, *Buddha*, p. 292.

[2] Mahavagga X, 2.

[3] A. B. Keith, *Buddhist Philosophy in India and Ceylon* (Oxford, 1923), p. 117.

In early Buddhism there were three concepts which comprehended the ethical quest and the philosophic achievement. *Sila*, *Samadhi* and *Prajna* are famous categories in the Buddhist literature. *Sila* is a comprehensive code of moral life. *Samadhi* is the attainment of deep mental training culminating in contemplation. Morality and contemplation result in the attainment of deep wisdom. These three concepts are integrally interconnected : "As hand washes hand and foot washes foot, so uprightness is purified by wisdom, and wisdom is purified by uprightness. Where there is uprightness there is wisdom : where there is wisdom, there is uprightness. And the wisdom of the upright and the uprightness of the wise, have of all uprightness and wisdom in the world the highest value." Concentration is the intermediate category in the transition from ethical purification to the attainment of profound philosophical vision and wisdom. "Pervaded by uprightness, self-concentration is fruitful and rich in blessing; pervaded by wisdom the soul becomes wholly freed from all infirmity, from the infirmity of desire, from the infirmity of becoming, from the infirmity from error, from the infirmity of ignorance." Sometimes two other categories, *Vimutti* (emancipation) and *Vimutti-Jnana-Darshana* (insight into the knowledge of emancipation) are also added to the triology of *Sila*, *Samadhi* and *Prajna*.

There are five elements in *Sila*—non-violence, non-thieving, non-adultery, not to indulge in falsehood and non-drinking. The prohibition of violence is socially very significant. "A monk abstains from killing living creatures; he refrains from causing the death of living creatures. He lays down the stick; he lays down weapons. He is compassionate and tender-hearted, he seeks with friendly spirit the welfare of all living beings." There are additional restrictions on the monk who joins the confraternity of ecclesiastical brethren. There are three conditions for the attainment of truth : *Sraddha* or faith, *darshana* or philosophic insight and *bhavana* or cultivation and meditation. The practice of truth has a great part to play in the moralisation and harmonisation of social relations. "What he has heard here he does not repeat there, to separate this man from that ; what he has heard there he does not repeat here, to separate that man from this. He is the uniter of the separated, and the confirmer of the united. He enjoys concord ; he seeks to promote concord ; he takes delight in concord ; he is a speaker of concord-producing words."

In the Buddhist literature we find repeated references to numerous moral categories[1] and although we do not find a systematic philosophy of ethics, nevertheless these categories have great social implications. Sometimes the ideal virtues are categorised as ten in number—charity, purification of conduct, patience, earnest endeavours, contemplation, intelligence, use of right means, strength and knowledge. We also find references to fear of committing sins (*Ottapa*), to purity of conscience (*Anavajja*) and to sympathy (*Samgaha*). Buddhism lays great stress on gifts. This positive social ethic of *dana* is immensely lauded in early Buddhism. A gift bestowed on those who are passionless, who do not hate, who are free from vanity and lust brings great reward. But in the interest of the right allocation of the economic resources of the society it is essential that the virtue of gift should be wisely exercised. "Better it would be to swallow a heated iron ball, like flaring fire, than that a bad unrestrained fellow should live on the charity of the land." Self-control in all its aspects has profound social implications also. Early Buddhism emphasizes sympathy (*samgaha*). It includes charity and gifts, gentle and unassuming conversation, kind acts and a dynamic sense of all-identificatian with the totality of living creatures. According to Buddhism the moral way of living culminating in philosophic wisdom is higher than the attainment of heaven or the acquisition of imperialism over the earth and all the worlds. Hence it is evident that in the Buddhist scheme of values, the economic, social and political spheres are rated inferior to the moral and spiritual spheres.

Early Buddhism takes special delight in the detailed categorization of the sins and evils from which a person has to guard himself. Murder, stealing and sexual impurity are the three sins of the body. Lying, slander, abuse and fruitless talks are the four sins of speech. Acquisitiveness, hatred and error are the three sins of the mind. These ten transgressions, if refrained from, are bound to have an ennobling effect on the patterns of social adjustment. Early Buddhism also condemns sensuality, the desire for rebirth; ignorance and metaphysical dialectics removed from the ethical way. There are five hindrances to ethical perfection ; appetitive sensuality (*kamachhanda*), evil desires (*vyapada*), sluggish activity and lethargic dullness (*tthinamiddha*), nervous excitement (*uddhachha*) and scepticism (*vichikitsa*). Sometimes we get references to the seven fetters or impediments to moral realization : lustful indulgence (*anumaya*), abhorrence (*patigha*), unfounded philosophical beliefs (*dristi*), scepticism (*vichikitsa*), vanity (*mana*), attachment to the prolongation of physical existence (*bhava raga*) and ignorance (*avidya*). Sometimes we find mention of the roots of evil (*akushala mulani*)—lying, delusion, hatred, attachment and lust. It is true that the orientation of these moral categories is toward individual perfection. But it is fundamentally incorrect to conceive of individual perfection as totally removed from the mechanics and dynamics of the social structure. The moral and spiritual purification of the individual does powerfully affect the feelings and sentiments of other human beings. There are numerous tales in Buddhist literature to illustrate the deep and profound transformation wrought in the lives of those who were once socially destructive like thieves, robbers and criminals.

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[1] C. A. F. Rhys David's article on "Amity" in the K. B. Pathak Commemoration Volume.

3. *SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ETHICS OF EARLY BUDDHISM*

In early Buddhism we also find a code of lay ethics. According to the Samyutta Nikaya if pious lay disciples direct their last aspirations and thoughts to the cessation of physical existence they can attain Nirvana. The lay disciples were also required to practise altruistic virtues. "Liberality, courtesy, benevolence, unselfishness under all circumstances and towards all—these qualities are to the world what the linchpin is to the rolling chariot." The Sigalovada Sutta of the Digha Nikaya gives us a traditional and conventional approach to the ethics of lay men. Its detailed analysis is important for a sociological study of Buddhist ethics. According to this Sutta parents should instruct their children and make endeavours for their progress and children should revere the parents and preserve the sanctity of family ideals. Teachers should impart the right type of instruction and the pupils should show respect and honour to them. Husbands should be loyal and faithful to their wives and should leave them autonomous in the management of household affairs. It is deeply touching to find the supreme ascetic Buddha preaching that ornaments should be given to wives. Friends should be liberal and generous and courteous in their reciprocal relations. The economic ethics of early Buddhism is also very significantly outlined in this Sutta. The concept of just labour and just compensation is emphasized. The employers should properly feed and pay the servants, tend them in cases of sickness and should occasionally provide them with luxuries if possible. Thus it is clear that the idea of economic exploitation of the employed is repugnant to Buddhist economic ethics. There is no idea at all of any extortion of surplus and unpaid labor from the employees. The servants are exhorted to get up before and retire after their masters and to be content and faithfully discharge their duties. Thus the economic ethics of Buddhism aims to replace competition and struggle by the development of a sense of organic harmony and mutual co-operation. Laymen are exhorted to take care of the temporal needs and requirements of monks and the latter are expected to impart the right kind of moral and spiritual training to the householders. The lay ethics of Buddhism is thus characterized by stress on harmony, mutual co-operation and organised confraternity in the achievement of peace and good-will.[1] In the Jatakas also there is the outline of an organic ethical culture for laymen. There is mention of six doors of gain : wealth, virtue, obedience to elders, study of the scriptures, truth and freedom from egoistic propensities.

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[1] Cf. the Mangala-Sutta No. 5 :

"Honouring mother and father, cherishing of child and wife,
And a peaceful occupation : This is the best good omen.
Giving of alms and righteous life, to cherish kith and kin,
Doing deeds that bring no blame : This is the best good omen.
Ceasing and abstaining from sins, to shun intoxicating drinks,
Not neglecting religious duties : This is the best good omen."

For obtaining success in life besides virtue and patience, skill is also emphasized.

Besides emphasizing the social and economic ethics of laymen, early Buddhism also refers to political ethics. Buddha upheld an ethically exalted and philosophically enlightened ideal for kingship. In the Samyutta Nikaya it is said that while once Buddha was living in a Himalayan hermitage, the thought occurred to him : "It is possible really to rule as a king in righteousness, without killing or causing to be killed, without practising oppression or permitting oppression to be practised, without suffering pain or inflicting pain on another." When Ajatsutru contemplated a war against the Vajjian confederacy, he commissioned his minister Vassakara to consult Buddha. Buddha then pointed out that so long as the Vajjians conformed to "certain fundamental laws" they would be invincible. These fundamental laws comprehend the political and social philosophy of Buddha. Adherence to the old established constitution is the first basic principle. Buddha also warned against the introduction of novel changes in the institutional mechanism. Thus like Plato in the *Republic* who says that no changes should be made in the four fundamental principles defined by him[2] and like Aristotle in his critcism of the proposals of Hippodamus regarding legal innovations,[2] Buddha advocates a conservative and traditional approach to politics. He stressed the regular meetings of the republican assemblies for the transaction of the business of the community. Is was essential that the deliberations and proposals of these assemblies should be oriented to the preservation of concord. The concept of concord thus eliminates the possibilities of the emergence of sectional and parochical interests which could engulf the social interest. Hence Buddha would advocate that the general will and consensus should be respected. The purity of the morals of the community was of tremendeus concern and the detention of women or girls among the clans was absolutely forbidden. The senior members

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1. *Republic*, Book IV, 423-424.
2. Aristotle's *Politics*, Book II, 1269a ; "For the habit of lightly changing the laws is an evil."

of the community, the elders in age and wisdom were to be consulted and their advice adhered to. The vagaries and experimentations proceeding from youthful immaturity could thus be avoided. The Dhammapada says : "He who always greets and constantly reveres the aged, four things will increase to him, viz. life, beauty, happiness, power."[1] Although Buddha had broken from the philosophical and religious traditions of Brahmanism, still it is remarkable to find that he did not contemplate a radical and immediate break with the past. Hence Buddha wanted that village shrines should be honoured and religious rites adhered to. He also stressed that due respect and honour should be paid to the Arahats. In the Jatakas also there are the outlines of political ethics. In the tale of Kurudhamma we find the notion that the happiness and welfare of the kingdom depends on the virtue of the king. The supreme influence of the ethics of Buddhism on political life was seen in the wonderful transmutation of the personality of Asoka from a vengeful imperialist to that of an enlightened sympathetic ruler. Under Buddhist ethical influence Asoka abolished capital punishment at first for certain crimes and by the thirtyfirst year of his reign, completely. The political ethics of Buddhism can be also concretely studied in the noble conduct and character of king Harsavardhana.

Buddha was not a social revolutionary. He did not preach any open crusade against the caste system. But his social ethics was calculated to enshrine the concept of merit in place of birth as the criterion of social stratification. "A man does not become a Brahmana by his platted hair, by his family, or by birth ; in whom there is truth and righteousness, he is blessed, he is a Brahmana. I do not call a man a Brahmana because of his origin or of his mother. He is indeed arrogant and he is wealthy ; but the poor, who is freed from all attachments, him I call indeed a Brahmana."[2] Early Buddhism prescribes moral

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1. Dhammapada, 109,
2. Dhammapada, 393 & 396.

and philosophic criteria for the attainment of Brahmanhood and a Buddhist Sramana is indistinguishable from a Brahmana in this moral sense. Thus the social ethics of Buddhism will be opposed to social stratification on the basis of the criteria of birth. It will favour a functional organization of the social order based on the criterion of moral excellence.

4. *CRITICAL REFLECTIONS AND CONCLUSION*

Buddhist ethics is more comprehensive than the traditional Brahmanical identification of ethics with duties relevant to professional calling. It goes beyond the conception of eithics as caste duties. Hence the content of virtuous conduct so long confined to caste obligations and sacrificial performances is definitely extended. The Dhammapada provides a summary of Buddhist ethics in these terms : "Not to blame, not to strike, to live restrained under the law, to be moderate in eating, to sleep and sit alone, and to dwell in the highest thoughts,—this is the teaching of the Awakened."[1] In Buddhism morality does not consist only in the performance of external action but it is imperatively laid down that intentions should be purified and philosophic intuition should be attained. Even when Buddhism accepts the traditional and conventional elements in ethics it teaches the incorporation of a moral element in them. Thus the abstractness and externality of action is suffused with the concreteness of pure sentiments.

Buddhist ethics is not founded upon the command of a divinely inspired primordial law-giver. Hence the sanction behind the moral imperatives of Buddhism is not the authentic revelation of the divine will by an angelic prophet. Buddha is the supreme teacher but he is not expressing the divine will. Hence the Buddhist ethical code is not rooted in the pre-existent conceptual pattern of the divine mind. According to early Buddhism the actions performed by an individual have a causal efficacy and the consequences of the acts performed are brought forth almost by an automatic inexorable vehemence. So long as evil actions do not begin to bring havoc upon the doer he relishes them. So also, so long as meritorious deeds do not begin to shed glory, the doer is not inclined to their performance. Early Buddhism teaches the almost cosmic operation of the law of Karman. There is no conception of a Leibnizean theodicy and pre-established harmony. Buddha stresses the cosmic operativeness of the law of Karma and this provides the categorial imperative for the ethical path. The belief in this law amounts to the visualization of social reform not on an institutional pattern but by effecting a transformation in human character. The central theme is to purify human motivation.

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[1] Dhammapada, 185

There is a definite strain of individualism in Buddhist ethics. The final goal of an individual human being is the attainment of emancipation. The realization of Nirvana which is the complete extinction of all pain and misery is the ultimate destiny of man. Nirvana can be attained by all individuals, provided the right type of means are employed. Even Buddha himself had to make tremendous efforts for its attainment. There is no concept of pre-destination in Buddhist ethics. Nirvana is not the monopoly of a selected or chosen group. It is capable of being universally realized. To this extent Buddhism reacts against the aristocratic element involved in the theodicy of pre-destination. The Kathopanishad states that the Atman can be realized only by him whom it chooses. But Buddhism teaches individual responsibility for the attainment of salvation. Although Buddha is the supreme teacher and leader and the revealer of the norm and although surrender to him is one of the cardinal tenets of Buddhism, still Buddha emphasizes one's own efforts for realization. He wants the disciples to be a light unto themselves (*atta-dipa*) and to rely on themselves. "Self is the lord of self, who else could be the lord? With self well-subdued, a man finds a lord such as few could find. The evil done, by oneself, self-begotten, self-bread crushes the foolish, as a diamond breaks a precious stone. By oneself the evil is done, by oneself one suffers; by oneself evil is left undone, by oneself one is purified. Purity and impurity belong to oneself, no one can purify another."[1]

[1] Dhammapada, 160 and 165.

This type of vigorous stress on individual efforts generates a profound sense of optimism. Buddhism explains the sinful and irrational structure of the world in terms of the deeds committed by individuals. Thus it teaches the individuals not to supplicate some external agency but it stresses to the utmost degree self-efforts. Thus it prepares the foundations of a social ethic of healthy and robust individualism. The idea that the individual can make or mar his destiny is one of the greatest contributions of Buddhism to social ethic. It is a great challenge to all pretentions to the autocratic and aristocratic monopoly of the final wisdom.

According to Buddhism the moral fact has two dimensions. The morality of action leads to the attainment of heaven. Early Buddhism derived from traditional Brahmanism the belief in heaven and hell. The doer of evil actions suffers twice. He suffers in this world and the next. The Jatakas refer to eight great hells and sixteen minor hells. Sometimes this figure of hells is raised up to one hundred and more. The Dhammapada would condemn the liar to hell. "The virtuous man delights in this world, and he delights in the next ; he delights in both. He delights and rejoices, when he sees the purity of his own work."[1] Thus one incentive to moral action is the attainment of heaven. Sometimes a better status in a future rebirth is regarded as the fruit of good deeds performed on earth. But the final goal of the moral fact including both actions and intentions is the attainment of Nirvana. When once this final goal is realized, morality has attained fullness—"Even thus, Bhikkhus, understand that ye must put away moral rules, let alone immoral rules." This conception of the moral way as a raft would seriously detract from the immense significance attributed to the ethical code in Buddhism. However, the general and overwhelming trend of Buddhism is to emphasize the supremacy of the moral norm even when it teaches the ultimateness of *Nirvana* and *Prajna*.

Buddhism teaches the vast significance of *Samadhi* and *Nirvana*. *Samadhi* is a state of deep and intense concentration.

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[1] Dhammapada, 16.

When it is engaged in not at intermittent intervals but as a matter of frequent duration, then it involves the element of adjustment to a super-normal world. This means that the more the transcendent aspects of ethics and metaphysics are emphasized, the more the elements of withdrawal and ascetic rejection of the world would become pronounced. There is no question of identification with the norms accepted in the society. Thus the final ethic of Buddhism is oriented to the ascetic realization of other-worldly goals. Although the lay ethics of Buddhism are based on accommodation and compromise with the world, and although common ideas, common interests and customs and mutual sympathy are stressed for the common people, the final and dominant note is withdrawal from the duties, sanctions and obligations of the social life. Thus we find a vast difference between Buddhist ethics and Greek ethics. Although Plato sings of the idea of the good, and although Aristotle refers to the contemplation of the pure activity of God, both of them teach the concept of reform of the *polis*. The final quest of Buddha is for *Nirvana* and all elements for adjustment and adaptation to the community are of secondary significance. "How is there laughter, how is there joy, as this world is always burning? Why do you not seek a light, ye who are surrounded by a darkness? This body is wasted, full of sickness, and frail; this heap of corruption breaks to pieces, life indeed ends in death."[1] Hence the supreme vocation is renunciation of the dark state of the householders' life and to make efforts for that realization which leads to the extinction of all sorrows and whence there is no return again to this tragedy-stricken world.

Buddhism stresses resolute endurance, forbearance, beneficence, benevolence and sympathy. It is true that all ethical preparations are oriented to the attainment of enlightenment but this does not really amount to the total devaluation of the mundane values and temporal interests of the lay people. There is no condemnation of the norms and technics and processes associated with the adjustments of family and social lives. Buddha did not preach social chaos and disorganization. Nevertheless, it is true that in his scheme of values the life of the ascetic who had renounced the home life was rated vastly superior to the life of the householder. Hence the life of the householder highly praised in the traditional Brahmanical code of social ethics is now regarded with an eye of critical suspicion. Early Buddhism marks the tendency to accentuate the monastic trends that were visible towards the end of the Upanishadic age. By exalting the life of the ascetic in quest of emancipation, Buddhism tends to build up a separate sphere of spiritual ethics removed from the profane cult of those who were still immersed in the pleasures of the world. This premium on asceticism and the supremacy of the moral virtues associated with the life of the Bhikshu creates a sense of psychological tension for the average believer. On one side there is the deep-seated desire of man to found a family and lead a comfortable extistence. On the other side there is the teaching of Buddhist ethics which preaches the evanescence of temporal goods and mundane values.[1] The constant emphasis on the inexorability of death leads at times to a sense of nihilistic despair and utter illusoriness in the minds of men. The natural quest for self-preservation is subjected to a series of devastating onslaughts by the hymns in praise of the conquest of egoism. Hence the final conclusion of Buddhist ethics, in spite of the occasional discussions of lay morality, is the quest of a system of soteriology and emancipation. The ultimate stress is not on social adjustment and the realization of rational common good as in Greek ethics but on the development and cultivation of an attitude of philosophic quiet and indifference.

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[1] Dammapada, 146, 147.

The dominant stress on an other-worldly orientation in quest of the extinction of pain and sorrow leads to the neglect of the conception of social rationality as the criterion of the good life. All action impelled by the calculation of self-interest is suspected in Buddhism. Desire in anticipation of any experience of pleasurable feeling is regarded as the root of evil and hence individual economic activity in quest of the maximization of individual profit can never find any theoretical foundation in the economic ethics of Buddhism. It is true that most of the psychological and moral attributes which are highly praised in early Buddhism do have direct and indirect social implications but the absence of the conception of the primacy of social good and its rational realization lead to the absence of any theory of social and economic justice. In early Buddhism individual hardships and privations are explained in terms of individual action and there is no attempt at the institutional and sociological analysis of the foundations of social irrationalities and contradictions. There is no attempt in early Buddhism to apply critical ethical judgments to the state and society. Hence Buddhism did not prescribe any thorough program of social reform. Only individuals can be conceived as capable of moral action. Buddha does not sponsor any program of the incorporation of morality and rationality in the structure of the state. Early Buddhism has no belief in an ethical state to be realized in the future. Nor could the transcendentally-oriented Buddhist ethics ever regard the political structure as the embodiment of freedom or the actualization of the ethical substance. According to the Buddhist scheme, emancipation is to be attained not by the performance of good socially-conforming works but by righteous mendicancy, intuitive perception and contemplative insight. Socially conforming works can at best lead to the attainment of heaven and good birth in the future. Hence there can be no ultimate motive for any definite interest in secular ends and positive programmes of social amelioration and betterment. Instead of stressing the performance of good works Nirvana is oriented to rending asunder the wheels of Karma. This transcendental stress implies the dissociation from all direct mundane interests. But this quest for Nirvana does not mean any anti-social egoistic hedonism. It is a mistake to regard transcendental ethics as anti-social. The quest of transcendental values is absolutely removed from being anti-social. The only charge from a sociological standpoint that can be levelled against a scheme of transcendental ethics is that it does not adequately stress social good. It is perfectly correct to hold that a transcendentally-oriented ethical system relegates the pursuit of secular values to a subordinate realm. But the realization of Nirvana can never be consonant with the doing of any deed that can have socially devastating implications and consequences. The charge of egoism is not correct because, after all, the goal of the extinction of suffering has to be attained by the individuals themselves. There can be no vicarious atonement and no realization of truth by proxy. The individuals are the loci of all those works and austerities which lead to the realization of truth and emancipation. But a person who has become enlightened can serve the fellow-seekers after truth in two ways. First, he can impart teachings to them. He can be of help in resolving their doubts and solving their problems. Secondly, he helps in setting standards of an exalted excellence of moral character. Hence the seer can become a centre of inspiration and he can radiate moral and spiritual vigour and strength.

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[1] Max Weber, "Religious Rejections of the World and their Directions", *Essays in Sociology*, p. 323 : "It is also in India that the technique which corresponds to such abnegation has been most highly developed. Monkhood, as well as the typical ascetic and contemplative manipulations, were not only first but also most consistently developed in India."

Buddhist ethics has certainly set before itself a transcendent ideal. Social, political and economic ethics have subordinate place here. The supreme and final goal is individual redemption from sins and sorrows and sufferings. The attainment of Nirvana is the supreme imperative. But although the technics of the realization of Nirvana are introspective, subjective and deeply personal, still the spiritual and ethical quest is regarded not in terms of quietistic passivity or the vacuum of resignation but in terms of a mighty conquering adventure. Hence the Dhammapada says : "Who shall overcome this earth, and the world of Yama and the world of the gods?...The disciple will overcome the earth, and the world of Yama, and the world of the gods."[1] The interpretation of the spiritual efforts towards emancipation in terms of conquest indicates the dynamic and powerful aspect of Buddhism and it should remove any association of weakness or sluggishness with the ethical and spiritual life.[1]

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[1] Dhammapada, 44.

Early Buddhism has set before us an exalted code of moral living. It certainly is a rigorous code but there can be no denial of or doubt about its elevated tone and nature. Buddha's unblemished life is one of the greatest events in the ethical advance of humanity. Early Buddhism has rendered a signal service to humanity by preaching the moralization of human conduct and by stressing universal nobility, compassion, benevolence and sympathy. It may not be possible to imitate the life of Buddha for ordinary individuals but the ideal that he has set can be a worthy goal for evolutionary achievement. Society will certainly benefit if these ideals and especially the supreme concept of non-hatred and loving kindness are incorporated not only in any one civilization but in the world as a whole.

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[1] Cf. Edgerton, "The Upanishads : What do they seek and why ?", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 1929.

APPENDIX II

THEOLOGY AND ETHICS IN KAUTILYAN POLITICAL THOUGHT[1]

My work *Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations* before being published in book form was printed serially in the *Journal of Bihar Research Society* in 1952-1953, in four successive parts. While it was being printed and published in the Journal, Dr. U. N. Ghoshal wrote an article in *The Indian Historical Quarterly* (March 1953, pp. 64-71) commenting on some of my conclusions but his criticisms do not appear to me to be valid.

The fundamental methodological orientation in *Hindu Political Thought and its Metaphysical Foundations* is towards attacking the tendency of interpreting Hindu political thought in the light of advanced and abstract concepts of western political thought. Western political thought in its various aspects is a highly sophisticated, theoretical and systematic type of intellectual enterprise. It has behind it the continuous labour of a large number of great thinkers for about twentyfive hundred years. Hence it is not possible to find that degree of abstract conceptualism, which we find in western political writers, in ancient Hindu political thought which did not advance beyond the stage of aphoristic and pragmatic governmental maxims. Most of the books and papers written on Indian political thought by Indian writers suffer from this basic fallacy that they try to read western political ideas and concepts and theories in the writings of ancient Hindu writers. Hence they believe, for example, that if Aristotle separates politics and ethics, this contribution must also be somehow discovered in India. But the time has now come when *Hindu Political thought must be interpreted in its own fundamental conceptual terms*. I am also opposed to the tendency present in some western writers to interpret ancient Hellenic political thought in terms of post-sixteenth century political concepts and I am happy to find that several scholars in the west also take a similar view.

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[1] Originally published in the *Journal of Bihar Research Society*, Dec, 1955.

(i) *Theology and Politics in Kauṭilya*

According to the writer in the *Indian Historical Quarterly* the Arthaṣāstra writers emancipated politics from the yoke of theology. I had criticized this view. The emancipation of politics from theology is a stupendous achievement. It is primarily a consequence of the Renaissanance in Europe. Even Plato and Aristotle incorporate theological notions in their political thought. The tenth book of the *Republic* discusses theology and eschatology. Some of the principles of theology discussed in Aristotle's *Metaphysics* have been accepted by him in his *Politics*.[1] Machiavelli begins the process of separation of politics and theology. Even Hobbes does not separate entirely the treatment of political and theological considerations. This will be apparent from a study of the third and fourth books of the *Leviathan*. Hence the vaunted claim of the emancipation of politics from theology in pre-Mauryan India has to be cautiously considered.

A writer can be credited with having emancipated politics from theology if he is an advocate of materialism, positivism and secularism. *We have to beware of confusing the prescription of ruthless political technics with the repudiation of theology.* Every student of history knows that some of the most cruel and callous and violent technics have been prescribed by writers for obtaining success in the battle waged for victory of theological symbols. It is true that the political technics of Kauṭilya and Bharadvaja are ruthless and relentless but it is absolutely unfounded to argue therefrom that Kauṭilya rids politics from the yoke of theology. In the first chapter of the Arthaṣāstra he pays adherence to the fundamental goals and objectives and dogmas of Hindu theology. Moreover, he is a strong adherent of the claims of Brāhmin supremacy and every student of Indian sociology knows that the claims of the Brāhmins to superiority are rooted in the theological notion of the *Puruṣa Sūkta*. Machiavelli, it may be noted as a point of contrast, did not sponsor the ecclesiastical pretentions of the clerical fraternity. According to Kauṭilya, the technics and prescriptions of the Arthaṣastra are comprehended in the concept of Rajadharma which is supposed to lead to heaven—राज्ञः स्वधर्मः स्वर्गाय. He also says:—तपस्विनां तु कार्याणि त्रैविद्यैः सह कारयेत्. Machiavelli, by contrast, does not advise the prince to take recourse to ecclesiastical ceremonies for the redemption of his soul. Kauṭilya requries the king to do "Pradakshiṇa" of the cow and the bull (सवत्सां धेनुं वृषभं च प्रदक्षिणीकृत्योपस्थानं गच्छेत्). He says that the king is 'ऋत्विगाचार्यसखः' The presence of the season-sacrificers shows that the king was to adhere to the Vedic ritualism and theology. Hence the service of Kauṭilya lies not in repudiating theological considerations but in writing a big treatise mainly devoted to the study and analysis of political and administrative problems in a comprehensive sense. His strong adherance to the claims and injunctions of Brāhmanical theology is almost self-evident. He says :—

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[1] Vishwanath Prasād Varma, "Aristotle's Methodology of Political Science," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, June 1955, pp. 106-123.

ब्राह्मणेनैधितं क्षत्रं मन्त्रिमन्त्राभिमन्त्रितम् ।
जयत्यजितमत्यन्तं शास्त्रानुगतशास्त्रितम् ॥

(ii) *Ethics and Politics in Kautlilya*

I never denied that the political and diplomatic technics of Kauṭilya are realistic, calculated and crafty. *But the real theoretical problem is—was Kautilya aware of having separated politics and ethics My answer is—definitely not.* Aristotle is aware of having separated politics and ethics, (See the last book of *Nicomachean Ethics*). But nowhere in the Arthaṣāstra is there any single sentence or verse to prove that Kauṭilya was conscious of having separated politics from ethics. Ethics had not assumed in Hindu thought the theoretically independent character that it did at the hands of western writers.

But Kauṭilya's theoretical unawareness of having separated politics and ethics is not something peculiar. In the Chhāndogya Upaniṣad occurs the description of the Pañchāgni Vidyā. Some of the lines that occur there are revolting to the refined aesthetic sense but what evidence is there to indicate that to the author also they appeared unethical and unaesthetic? Some modern western critics like Winternitz have criticized the defence of Dharmayuddha in the Bhagavadgītā but to the author of the Gītā that was a legitimate implication of the traditional theology and sociology. As a matter of fact, the Gītā condemns the attitude of mendicancy as अनार्यजुष्टमस्वर्ग्यमकीर्तिकरम्. It follows that what to a critic advocating different ethical and aesthetic presuppositions may appear unpalatable may have been only a logical implication according to the original author. My conclusion is that Kauṭilya's policy and technics may appear ruthless and relentless to us but to him they were comprehended in the Dharma of the king—त्रय्या हि रक्षितो लोकः प्रसीदति न सीदति.

According to his sociology if a person of a different social order, say a Brāhman or a Vaiṣya would take recourse to them, then that would be reprehensible because every order has its own Swadharma :—स्वधर्मं संदधानो हि प्रेत्य चेह च नन्दति.

But granting that Kauṭilya is not aware of separating politics and ethics, can we as interpreters say, in view of his relentless statecraft, that he separates politics and ethics? According to scientific methodology we are required first to state our own ethical presuppositions and assumptions. Modern scientific methodology is oriented to the acceptance of relativism.[1] There is nothing absolutely ethical or non-ethical. What is immoral to a Tolstoyan pacifist is legitimate for a Marxist revolutionary. What may be morally repugnant to a Buddhist is the highest norm to an inhabitant of Madagaskar. Hence unless the critic states what his own ethical presuppositions are, it is unscientific to condemn others as having eschewed moral considerations. What I am saying is illustrated very well in the second canto of the Bhaṭṭikavyam where the relativism of Dharmas has been pointed out. What is immoral from the democratic standpoint is only a part of social ethics (*Sittlichkeit*) according to Hegel. Hence ethical relativism and its methodological implications make it imperative that we can only consider some opinion to be unethical from a specific standpoint and belief. There can be no immutable judgment.

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[1] Max Weber, *Methodology of the Social Sciences*; Felix Kaufmann, *Methodology of the Social Sciences.*

There is also another consideration. An advocacy of cruel political diplomacy does not imply that the writer is a critical analyst of the political scene and process. A value-free (*Wert-frei*) political science is only an aspiration. Kauṭilya sketches the fundamentally value-impregnated concept of "Rajarshivritta." He teaches the virtues of self-restraint. He is a believer in the dominant moral concepts of the Hindu tradition. From the fifth, sixth and seventh chapters of the first book of the Arthaṣāstra it appears that he is a fundamental believer in the ultimate triumph of the virtues of moral restraint in history—विद्याविनयहेतुरिन्द्रियजयः कायः Hence we must never make the mistake of identifying the policy of cruel and ruthless pursuit of political and diplomatic power with the renunciation of moral and valuational considerations on a theoretical plane. Hence I have urged in my book a more philosophic study of the theoretical implications of the methods followed by the ancient writers in their studies of political phenomena.

APPENDIX III

PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY IN THE BHAGAVADGITA

1. *INTRODUCTION*

The Bhagavadgita is decidedly one of the greatest of the world's scriptures. For over two millennia it has been the most precious gem in the literary and philosophical masterpieces of the Hindu people. It has been commented upon, studied, recited and revered by generations after generations and it still commands a tremendous following. It epitomizes in a short compass the spiritual achievements and experiences of the ancient seers, and its conciseness as well as its majestic style have endeared it to the Hindus for centuries. Mystics and sages as well as dialecticians and scholastics have found it a very helpful instrument in their respective pursuits. Since the introduction of Sanskrit studies in Europe this book has won adherents in diverse camps. Idealists, romanticists, theists, Christians and others find words of great meaning in it. William Von Humboldt wrote in a letter to Frederick Von Gentz (1827) : "It is propably the most profound and most sublime work the world can show". August Schlegel prepared a critical edition of the text with a Latin translation. Unquestionably, the Bhagavadgita is a great book and the very fact that it has had such a glorious career of surpassing influence over thinkers and masses is a great testimony to the vitality of its message. The Gita, or the divine song as it is called in English, is a unique book in the world in the sense that it combines profundity with a great popular appeal. The dramatic scene of the famous Mahabharata War and the emotional fervour and reverence with which the Hindu mind looks upon Krishna have combined to give this book greater power for influencing the cultural evolution of India. The Gita is synthetic and integral in its approach. It is not sectarian. It does not criticize or condemn, but it reconciles and harmonizes. It does not have the narrow outlook of the fanatical prophet bent upon denouncing whatever appears antagonistic and antithetical, but it wants to provide the foundation of a large reconciling and synthetic vision and experience. It aims to awaken moral and spiritual consciousness in the minds of men. Even in the modern age of scientific, sceptical and critical intellectualism it has continued to attract persons of diverse cultural and social background. Its intellectual appeal and success make it necessary that its message and teachings should be critically examined and analysed. In the Western countries we find that Plato and Aristotle are being constantly studied, interpreted and commented upon. In India the intellectual influence of the Gita has been comparable to that of Plato in Europe. Besides, the Gita is also a great religious scripture which Plato's dialogues have never been. Hence one does not have to apologize for a new sociological study of this powerful book.

Hitherto the Gita has been discussed as a mystical and metaphysical book. I will try to stress its nature as a philosophy of history. Although the theme of philosophy of history is a new development and has been mainly emphasised in the European continent, still in the older scriptures and classics we can find ideas and notions which bear on the theme of historical causation. In this sense we can say that in books VIII and IX of the *Republic* and Book V of Aristotle's *Politics* we have a philosophy of history. History has been, in this broad sense, always the subject of reflection and philosophical speculation. Sensitive and critical souls, who cannot take things as they are, want to probe into the rationale of things, and they make reflections upon the philosophy of history. In the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* we find attempts to find some meaning behind events, and in one sense we can say that in the Uttarakanda of the Ramayana and in the Santi Parva of the Mahabharata we have such historical reflections. The basic and fundamental problem of the philosophy of history is social causation. In the ancient classics and scriptures we find an integral approach in the sense that human history is linked up with cosmic history. For us at the present day, strict naturalistic causal investigation of specific social problems has a great appeal. We are living in an era of empiricism and quantitative and inductive methodology. But the grasp of the ancients was more intuitional and more universal. To them the individual was part of the cosmos. The explanations of social and political events also required the mediation of imponderable spiritual forces. To take an example—the law of *Karma* provides a hypothesis for the explanantion of the details of the happenings in a man's life. Unless we take into account this cosmic orientation we may fail to understand the philosophy of history in the Bhagavadgita. If we want to find replicas of Buckle, Hegel, Marx and Spengler we shall be disappointed, but if we want to know the fundamental conception of historical motivation, we certainly can find something relevant to our purpose. Since the Gita offers a spiritual interpretation of history, it is necessary to have in mind its basic metaphysical conceptions.

2. *METAPHYSICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE GITA'S PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY*

According to the Gita the conception of a primordial spiritual being is central. This spiritual being is to be intuitively perceived, felt and realized. This supracosmic agency is called Brahman, and since the Rigveda it has been the dominant category of Indian philosophy. In the principal Upanishads there is great stress on the attributeless and indeterminate character of this supernal being, although in some of the Upanishads there is to be found the tendency to conceive of the absolute as being the perfection of all noble attributes The Gita accepts the conception of the attributeless spiritual being, but for purposes of religious devotion it conceives of that as a personal lord. In its conception of the Purushottama it posits a being even higher in status than the impersonal absolute. The Purushottama is beyond the *Akshara Purusha*. The Indian mind takes peculiar delight in conceiving of the simultaneous presence of antagonistic attributes in the supreme being. By regarding the supreme as both near and far, motionless and active, internal and external, it wants to indicate the inadequacy of logical categories to comprehend a being beyond the bounds of logic. By a queer logic, although the Purushottama is the supreme being, still he is supposed to be embodied as Krishna, the divine incarnation. The Gita is emphatic in stating that there is both a manifested and an unmanifested aspect of the absolute, but it is difficult to understand how the supreme Purushottama who is beyond even the supracosmic impersonality of the Vedantic Absolute can be embodied in a human form. It is possible to accept the presence of divine consciousness in men ; it is also possible to accept that some human beings can have their life raised to great exalted heights, but to conceive that Krishna represents the fullness and the plenitude of supracosmic transcendence is a little puzzling. But this conception of Purushottama, although difficult from the logical standpoint even for those who accept a spiritual view of the world, is significant for the exposition of the Gita's philosophy of history. The notion of the human embodiment of the divine being invests history with a fundamental worth and significance. Human life, the political world and the cosmos are not figments of imagination or temporary and transient illusions, but are expressions of the supreme spirit. The universe receives its meaning from being a spiritual laboratory for divine experimentations. The conception of the embodiment of the divine Purushottama stresses the notion of divine humanity. The *Avatara* is the meeting point of the human and the divine. He combines the transcendental unmanifested potentiality and the cosmic concrete actuality. Hence the conception of the Purushottama is supremely important from the standpoint of a spiritual philosophy of history.

The supreme being works through his lower and the higher Prakriti. In the Vedas, we find the conception of a cosmic creative power that is responsible for the being of the mutable universe. The conception of *Prakriti* provides the spiritual dialectic according to the Gita. "Earth, water, fire, air, space, mind, understanding and egoism, this is my nature divided eightfold. But this is a lower form of my nature, and higher than this which is animate...and by which this universe is upheld. Know that all things have these (for their source). I am the producer and the destroyer of the whole universe. There is nothing else...higher than myself; all this is woven upon me, like numbers of pearls upon a thread." In the thirteenth chapter of the Gita the Prakriti is called the Kshetra and the supreme spirit is regarded as inhabiting the various bodies as the knower of the Kshetra. "The great Brahman (*i. e.*, Prakriti) is a womb for me, in which I cast the seed. From that,...is the birth of all things. Of the bodies...which are born from all wombs, the (main) womb is the great Brahman, and I (am) the father, the giver of the seed." This conception of Prakriti as the creative power of God and acting ultimately under his direction is a partial synthesis of the notion of Vedantic God and the Samkhya theory of the Prakriti as an unmanifested, undifferentiated potential of cosmic multiplicity and diversification. This conception of the Prakriti as the divine executive agency adds additional worth to history and the universal theatre of human activity, because in its ultimate sources the universe is regarded as being impelled by powerful spiritual forces. The two conceptions of the Avatara and Prakriti impart a dynamic significance to history, because the universe is not an illusion but is invested with spiritual significance. In other words, we can say that the notions of the *Avatara* and *Prakriti* bridge the gulf between supracosmic utter transcendence and impersonality ou the one side and mere mechanism and blind operation on the other. Thus the universe comes to have an organic spiritual connection, and thereby it receives a meaning. From the supreme being, through the Avatara and spiritual Prakriti, to the pulsation of the forces and events of the physical world, there is a supreme connecting link. In its cosmological explanations the Gita stresses this notion of inter-connectedness. "Those who know a day of Brahman to end after one thousand ages, and the night to terminate after one thousand ages, are the persons who know day and night. On the advent of day, all perceptible things are produced from the unperceived ; and on the advent of night they dissolve in that same (principle) called the unperecived. This same assemblage of entities, being produced again and again, dissolves on the advent of night and...issues forth on the advent of day without a will of its own. But there is another entity, unpereived and eternal, and distinct from this unperceived (principle), which is not destroyed when all entities are destroyed. It is called the unperceived, the indestructible; they call it the highest goal." Hence according to the Gita there is the supreme transcendent unmanifest Reality, and there is the unmanifested nature containing the potentials of manifestation. But this latter is not an independent power as in the Samkhya philosophy. It is a power of the same supreme spirit. It is not an independent real, but a dependent power for supreme action in the universe. The very conception of a spiritually operative agency provides a powerful spiritual orientation to history and the cosmos. It is Prakriti which holds and provides the foundation for the antagonisms, contradictions and alienations of men, and which imparts the opportunities for their development and growth by its immanent vital power. Hence it is clear that the Gita not only discusses mysticism and transcendental metaphysics, but it provides a meaning to material and vital action by positing a spiritual ontology. It is true that the conception of the spirit, according to the Gita, is not something logical, conceptual, scientific or sociological. It is grounded upon faith ; but it is not mere irrational naive faith. The Gita believes that it is a faith which can be grounded upon inward spiritual realisation produced either by action done in a spirit of dedication, or by spiritual gnosis, or by devotion.

3. *PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY IN THE BHAGAVADGITA*

The general normal mentality of man is to accept things as they are or appear to be. It is only when there has occurred some great shock or unexpected change for the worse in human or national history that men begin to reflect upon their destiny. Arjuna at the time of the beginning of the Mahabharata war is stricken with great sorrow and dejection at the prospect of a fratricidal holocaust. In the ghastly prospect of the civil war he sees the doom of all traditional values and social conventions. He is filled with intense inward agony and anguish of the soul at the thought that there is ahead of him the grim prospect of total social collapse. His recoil is not based upon the spiritual rejection of the transient world, but is the despair of a man of action who is unable to bear the prospects of the grim social and political disaster. This tragic historical context provides the scene and setting for some of the deepest reflections on the destiny of man and society. Arjuna's problem is not the quest of mystical absorption or supramental transformation. He is concerned with social cohesion—a legitimate desire of a fighter and political leader.

It is also clear that what was at stake in the battle was power and sovereignty. The parties were not contesting for the splendours of the spirit but for political triumph and social authority. Hence what was to be decided by the outcome of the war was a political issue, and hence the occasion reminds us of the fight between the Greeks and the Persians, or of Athens and Sparta at the time of the Peloponnesian war. The political scene serves to give a poignant meaning to the philosophy of history of the Bhagavadgita.

One of the dominant conceptions of the Gita's philosophy of history is the Avatara theory. Although not easy of credence, this theory has to be understood for getting an insight into what the Gita has to contribute to the understanding of history. Although the supreme spirit is transcendent from the ultimate standpoint, still for the purpose of the establishment of cosmic righteousness, the spirit descends into humanity. The Avatara is the descent of the divine consciousness into the terrestrial manifestation. Whenever some great principle has to be established and stabilised in the universal evolutionary progression, there is a descent of divine consciousness. But the Gita stresses not this great cosmic purpose of the Avatara, but its social and political purpose. Krishna says that although in his supreme essence the absolute spirit is unborn and imperishable, nonetheless it becomes embodied in order to fulfil a purpose. Whenever there is an ascendancy of the unrighteous and unregenerate forces, then the supporters of this crude and evil way of life have to be uprooted. This is the negative purpose of the Avatara. But it has also a positive purpose. Whenever there is a decline of the righteous and noble forces, then God incarnates himself for upholding the cause of truth and goodness. The conception that in various ages God incarnates himself for the purpose of maintaining the way of truth and goodness provides a profound optimism. The philosophy of history as enunciated in the Gita is thus a gospel of hope and vitality. It does not teach the mere existence of crisis or decline at certain periods in history, but it asserts that in and through periods of decadence, nihilism, gloom and desperation, the final and eventual triumph of the right and the true is certain. The relation between the final triumph of justice in the world and the existence of the spiritual absolute provides a note of vigorous certainty to the seekers of the noble path. The Avatara is the agency who sanctifies the creed and purpose of a Godward existence. Hence it is evident that the purpose of the Avatara is also sociological in its nature. Just as Arjuna's fears at the time of the great battle were due to the impending prospects of social disaster, so here also Krishna stresses that the upholding of the social order is one of the dominant factors responsible for the human embodiment of the divine. Carlyle stressed the role of heroes in history. Hegel pointed out the role of the "world-historical individuals." The conception of the Avatara and his supreme role in human history implies that the Gita does not assert the mere dynamism of autonomous objective forces in history. It does not uphold the view that the fight between the divergent embodiments of diverse forces will propel the historical structure by itself. On the other hand it believes that the Avatara provides the divine element of synthesis amidst the fluent antagonisms of opposed social and historical forces. Although the Avatara is a divine being, still this conception is in line with those philosophies of history which stress the creative and dominant role of the human leader in historical movements. Hence it is that the Hindu mind throughout its long career of historical vicissitudes has always longed for a divine redeemer at the time of crisis. Not the dialectical resolution of the tension of opposed forces but the incorporation of the supreme divine force into the historical body politic is the only real solution according to the traditional Hindu belief. The conception of the Avatara is thus responsible for the chiliastic and futuristic elements in Hindu sociological thinking.

This conception of the Avatara is, according to me, inadequate for the explanation of human history on two grounds. First, it minimises the role of the social and historical objective forces. Modern researches and investigations point out that only he can become a great man who has the uncommon foresight to decipher the dominant tendencies of his age and the extraordinary capacity to make himself the spokesman of the force which, although apparently and temporarily weak, is potentially stronger and is oriented to the future. If a man fails to take into consideration the forces of his age, he can be an idealist, a visionary, a mystic philosopher or an unsuccessful revolutionary. At times he may become the prophet and seer of a great idea that may become important at a remote day. But to become a dynamic maker of the destiny of nations it is essential that one should identify oneself with the dominant forces of the immediate future. This conception of leadership is not glorification of the powers that be, but it only stresses that the creative leader of nations has to become the spokesman of some great force, otherwise his energies will not bear fruit. Napoleon and Lenin became makers of history because they were the executive agents of forces which were powerful. All the great leaders owe their success to dynamic identification with historical forces. Although the Avatara is also supposed to work with the aid of his Prakriti, still in its sociological setting the notion of Avatara appears to imply the incorporation of an alien and unrelated force in the historical process. But if we could say that the terrestrial success of the Avatara is due to his being the spokesman of the forces of goodness and truth, then this view may sound more plausible. The belief that the Avatara in his divine omnipotence can do what he likes by working miracles may have been acceptable to cruder minds, but for the construction of a spiritual philosophy of history it is necessary to integrate the conception of Avatara with the socio-historical structure.

The conception of Avatara is inadequate in another sense also. Empirical investigations of history point out that the historical structure is not the creation of any supernormal agent but of the collective action of billions of human masses in active and dynamic inter-action with the forces of nature. History in other words represents the collective efforts of men to control nature and to organise a more satisfied society planned on rational lines. For an insight into history it is necessary to realise that behind the so-called decisive events there is the cumulative power of human collective agency operating almost with sure and deterministic certainty. Hence for the grasp of historical dynamics it is not only necessary to apotheosize the great event and the great heroic leader, but to stress simultaneously the multiple action of a vast number of human beings in complex inter-dependence. The great collective humanity is a mighty galvanizing force and is supremely significant for the historical dynamic. The theory of the Avatara tends to exalt divine omnipotence and neglects the role of human action. If we are to construct a spiritual philosophy of history which will be comprehensive in its scope, we have to acknowledge the significance of cumulative human action along with the force of the divine spirit. If we stress only the latter, we may have a mystical gospel but not a spiritual philosophy of history. In other words, if human beings have behind them spiritual impulsion and themselves are manifestations of the absolute, then a comprehensive spiritual philosophy of history must also accept their creative role.

Another significant element in the Gita's philosophy of history is the conception of Vibhuti. Vibhuti signifies special power or great power. Whatever in the world is mighty, powerful, full of splendour and resplendence is a Vibhuti of God. Although whatever exists in the world owes its ultimate origination to God, still the great and the illustrious and the mighty may be said to manifest the divine power to a greater degree. The divine is all and in all, but there are degrees of divine manifestation. The philosophy of the Vibhuti is sociologically significant in two ways. First, it simultaneously tends to exalt power and virtue. Thus it provides the philosophy of reconciliation. In human life and history, the element of power indicated by *Tejas* and *Jaya* cannot be negated or minimized. Even the great Mahabharata war itself was fought under the leadership of mighty stalwarts and leaders like Krishna, Bhisma, Drona and Arjuna. But according to the Gita mere *Tejas* and *Jaya* are inadequate. What is needed is their reconciliation with *sattva*. The Gita never prescribes mere efflorescence of the *Rajas*. Action, energy, kinesis and dynamism symbolised by *Rajas* have always to be synthesized with the luminous and virtuous elements. But although the conception of the Vibhuti in the thought-system of the Gita provides a synthesis of vitality and knowledge, still sociologically speaking the element of vitality gets the more ascendant place. In the philosophical systems of India and especially in the Yoga system of Patanjali, Vibhuti signifies supernormal powers attained by penances and Yogic austerities. Hence the selection of a concept primarily signifying power to indicate the terrestrial manifestations of God indirectly stresses the theory of power as a goal. Moreover, from the sociological standpoint, some of the statements in the Vibhuti Yoga chapter of the Gita are socially damaging. For example, the statement "of cheats, I am the game of dice" does not have healthy social connotations. Furthermore, the statements, "I am Rama among those that wield weapons" and "I am the thunderbolt among weapons" may indirectly prepare the foundations of a politics of military power. These latter statements, in any way, will justify our interpretation of at least parts of the Bhagavadgita as incorporating a philosophy of history.

Besides the conceptions of the Avatara and the Vidhuti, the notion that most serves to illustrate the philosophy of history in the Bhagavadgita is the Visvarupa. The Visvarupa is considered by many commentators to be a great theophany. It is regarded as a mystical deep vision capable of being seen and realized by the illuminated eye of the seer and the devotee. From our standpoint, the Visvarupa or the cosmic manifestation in an embodied shape stresses several conceptions which are important for a philosophy of history. First, it emphasizes the aspects of gigantic grandeur, supreme majestic fervour and magnified lustre. It is a fear-inciting and terror-striking supreme sight. The Cosmic Being shows terrific powers, almost colossal in their dimensions. This being has multiple hands, countless heads, bellies and feet and big destructive teeth. On all accounts it is a huge being. This aspect of the cosmic being represents static being. But there is also a dyamic aspect of the being. According to the Gita, all the great heroes and leaders are represented as hurling themselves with terrific fury into the mouth of the great being. Bhisma, Drona, Karna and all the mighty protagonists on the side of the Pandavas themselves were rushing into this vast cosmic conflagration. It appears like a gigantic destruction. The Gita says: "And some with their heads smashed are seen (to be) stuck in the spaces between the teeth. As the many rapid currents of a river's waters run towards the sea alone, so do these heroes of a human world enter your mouths blazing all around. As butterflies, with increased velocity, enter a blazing fire to their destruction, so too do these people enter your mouths with increased velocity (only) to their destruction. Swallowing all these people, you are licking them over and over again from all sides, with your blazing mouths. Your fierce spendours, O Vishnu : filling the whole universe with (their) effulgence, are heating it." Thus we see that the cosmic form has both the static and the dynamic aspects. It not only provides the abode and habitation for the great gods and the divine beings and celestial figures, but there is also a ceaseless commotion whereby all the mighty hurl themselves into the mouth of this being. In other words, cosmic death, which is only a symbolic way of representing the element of catastrophic change and mutation, is the dark gloomy inevitable destiny of all. Hence the Gita says that the Godhead is the great force of death and destruction.

The Godhead embodied in human form is Kala, the great destroyer of the worlds. Kala signifies time, the great creator of change and catastrophies. It is the fusion of the past, present and future in an eternal stupendous dynamic simultaneity. It is eternal duration, but with the potentials of the future already actualized in almost a divine relization. Sri Krishna says that even without the agency of Arjuna, those mighty heroes and fighters were going to die. They in a sense were already killed by God. Hence Krishna exhorts Arjuna to get up, fight and enjoy the comforts of a great kingdom. Arjuna is only the agent and the instrument—*Nimitta*. The Godhead had already killed Drona, Bhisma and Jayadratha. Hence there could not be any cause of alarm. Further, Krishna promises sure victory to Arjuna. It is clear from this account that they who try to put a mere mystical or supramental interpretation on the verses of the Gita are one-sided. Almost all interpreters agree that the *Visvarupa* is the great climactic stage in the entire Gita. The chapter describing the *Visvarupa* is the most inspired and elevated utterance in the entire poem. It is full of seriousness and profundity. This is the great occaseion to deliver the supreme message. And the message that is given is that even a great historical and national leader like Arjuna is only an agent and a means for the realization of the great cosmic purpose. The historical reality is gigantic, and in spite of the presence of terrifiic aspects it is divinely determined in its inward texture. The concept of divine spiritual determinism behind the apparently horrible, grim and tragic aspects of the world implies that even the greatest individual is powerless, too powerless. His greatness lies not in vain and egoistic assertion, but in acting in conformity with the revealed dictates of the divine spirit for the furtherance of its great and supreme world-design. The notion of Kala thus stresses the element of immanent divine teleology in history operating with inevitable and destructive finality.

4. *SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF SPIRITUAL FREEDOM*

The presence of the immanent divine teleology and the insignificance of human egoistic efforts and claims shows the importance of the Karmayoga in the Bhagavadgita In the days before the Gita was composed, Karma signified mainly ritualistic actions. The Gita extends the conception of Karma to comprehend all types of action—physical, volitional and mental. When there is the operation of a divine teleology dictating the executive agency of the Prakriti, then the human ego grasping vainly at the consequences of action does not have much importance. What is necessary is that the human being should not be attached to the fruits following from actions. The human being has a right only to actions, and not to the consequences thereof. The Gita says that creative agency belongs to the three constituent Gunas of Prakriti. The human soul in its inward being is silent and inactive. The realization of the cosmic operativenecess of Prakriti generates an attitude of resignation. A man becomes non-attached not only to the consequences, but also to the actions. Behind the actions he traces not the operation of the partial and limited ego, but of the Prakriti which also is a power of God. The human agent therefore refuses to be engrossed in actions. He thinks that he is only one factor in the consummation of Karma. The situational environment as well as the means and the instruments chosen are not of his creation. He can only to a limited extent make some changes in the allocation of means and ends. Behind all actions and reactions there is the supreme inscrutable force of "Daiva"—the unknown cosmic and supracosmic destiny. I think that to the extent that the Gita stresses the performance of action in a spirit of disinterestedness, surrender to God and for the sake of the benefit of the world, its gospel is of supreme sociological significance. The great social, political and religious leaders were all selfless. Those whose visions are warped by petty passions consume their energies in fruitless work. Only those people who consecrate all their energies on great actions calculated to enhance the good of the world are able to conserve their power and do some great work. Hence in the Indian philosophical and ethical discipline great stress has always been laid on purification, discipline, concentration of energy and on an all-governing faith in the power of the supreme which will guarantee sure and certain victory to the virtuous. According to the Gita, the purification of the will, emotions, affections and sensibilities is necessary. If the passions are let loose they bring havoc. Hence it is extremely essential that there should be a rational governance of the unregenerate elements of man's life. But unlike Kant, the Gita does not teach merely rational universalization of moral conduct. Reason alone cannot provide the universalized categorical imperative. Even reason can be affected by passions. Hence the only necessary antidote to the influence of sensibilities and affections is the power of the spirit. The Gita inculcates the supremacy of the spirit. If spiritual powers are acquired, then the mechanism of nature and the powers of the sensibilities and passions lose their operative vigor. If reliance is placed merely on the egoistic freedom of the will, there is the danger that the lower nature of man may still assert itself. Hence freedom is chimerical unless it is grounded upon the spiritual self. If the powers of the spirit are acquired, then only can the human soul become genuinely transformed and transfigured. Then it can become the real actor, not swayed and dismayed by the actions and affections of the three gunas. Its intellect then becames stabilized. The Karmayogin becomes almost divine, and he transcends the canons and criteria of conventional morality. But this transcendence does not amount to a eapacity and freedom to trample upon the good and the noble as ordinarily conceived. It does not mean a transgression of the Christian litany of virtues, as was the case with world-historical individuals like Caesar, Frederick and Napoleon. It does not mean a Dionysian transvaluation of values in the sense of the assertion of Antichrist and a gigantic will-to-power. But it signifies the utter consummation of the good. It means ascent to those heights wherefrom it is not possible to do evil. Going beyond good and evil does not mean the vulgar liberty to engage in evil. If anybody thus interprets the Gita in a grossly sensualistic and vulgar hedonistic sense he fails to grasp the immensity and profundity of the Vedantic teachings. The man of realization of the Gita who has faith in the creative powers of the spirit is acting not in obedience to conventional criteria, but out of the fullness of the spiritual being. It is true that some of the sayings and utterances of the Upanishads and the Gita stress that the man of supreme gnosis is beyond the reach of evil even if he were to do some actions which may seem to contradict the canons of ordinary morality. Some of the Indian ascetic writers also tend to stress this standpoint in order to indicate their superiority to the ethics of the populace. But this type of attitude can be justified only from a metaphorical standpoint. A spiritual metaphysics can never sanction crudeness, vulgarity and the trampling of good. Hence when the Gita says that if a person, who has conquered the ego-sense and whose intellect is completely unattached, were even to kill the three worlds he would not be stained, it is not sanctioning Machiavellism. For killing the three worlds without suffering the contamination of sin, it is imperative to become totally unattached. But it is not easy to become unattached and disinterested.

Hence it is clear that in the Gita's philosophy of history, supremacy belongs not to the freedom of the egoistic limited will, but to the spiritual will which acts in conformity with the will of the supreme spirit. Therefore the Gita preaches that the human will in its present shape is insignificant and controlled by the necessitarian march of nature, but if it becomes united with the divine force then it can enjoy the power, the vitality, the plenitude, the resplendence, etc. of the divine.

5. *THE SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY OF THE BHAGAVADGITA*

A problem, important from the standpoint of a philosophy of history, is the connection between spiritual gnosis and the structure of society. The Gita never advocates complete renunciation of action. Such renunciation is neither possible nor desirable. The cosmos is a great sacrifice, designed by the supreme God, and he is immensely interested in its preservation and in the victory of truth and goodness. Hence the embodied Godhead himself performs actions for the enhancement of the good of all living beings of the world. For the sake of realization, and even after God-realization, the Gita enjoins that people should perform the duties pertaining to their station in life. Krishna says that the four-fold order of society has been created by God in consonance with the criteria of qualities, action and nature. Towards the end of the book there is a list of the various psychologicial propensities and social actions that fall to the share of the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas, the Vaisyas and the Sudras. If these actions are performed in a spirit of concentration, dedication and surrender, then they lead to the dawn of perfection. Two questions pertaining to the philosophy of history are important here. First, the four-fold social order with all its implications of superiority, subordination, social distance, and the hereditary conferring of status on people appears iniquitious to the modern democratic and equalitarian consciousness. It is true that the Gita is not a gospel teaching socialism and democracy. The attempt to find the germs of modern enlightened and progressive ideologies in the ancient scriptures is methodologically defective. Moreover, it suffers from a queer notion of the acceptance of the superiority of the present mentality and its canons of actions and behaviour. Why should the roots of natural right and economic liberty be traced in the Rigveda or the Old Testament or Plato's *Republic* ? Those books tried to solve the social, political and economic problems of a different epoch. Our situation is different, and any attempt to incorporate bodily the great classics and scriptures, in the contemporary world, can only lead to lamentable disaster. We can only obtain inspiration from their eternal and supremely important principles. The Gita also should be approached in this light, and we can thus see that some of its fundamental insights are still valid today. With regard to the fourfold social order, it is only fair to say that the Gita never sanctions the iniquities associated with the caste system in the era of its stagnation and decadence. Compared with the notions of those days when the book was written, it breathes a liberal spirit to the extent that it sanctions the possibility of divine realization by all, even by the people of the humblest birth and by people following the meanest occupations, provided they are of a pure and humble spirit. The main purpose of the Gita is not to teach social conservatism and reaction, but to inculcate nobility of action and righteousness of intention. It is utterly incorrect to denounce the Gita as the theoretical supporter of a degenerated feudal order. It was not composed in the interests of the Brahmin class. There is plausibility in the statement of the Gita that the Brahmins should concentrate on spiritual work, the Kshatriyas on military and political activity, the Vaisyas on activities of production, and the Sudras on service. This system has several merits. It minimises hectic competition in the struggle for life. It provides a separation between political power of the Kshatriyas and economic power of the Vāisyas—a principle also stressed by Ploto in his *Republic*. But it also raises other issues, for example, the criteria as to the placement of different individuals in the respective social orders. Plato referred to the conception of transposition of ranks, but the practical operation of even this principle is difficult. We may repudiate the idea as preached in the Gita that the fourfold social order has been created by God, as a theological statement not of much consequence, but we are sure that any future programme of socio-economic organization will have to avoid the unification and concentration of the sources of power. At a time when the intellectuals of the world are giving up their traditions of liberty and independence for the sake of security, it is deeply gratifying to find that the Gita in its ideal of the Brahmin and the Yogi places before us a conception of intellectual and moral enhancement which will not yield to worldly power and wealth. The superiority of the Brahmain as to the fears and temptations of the world is one of the noblest of ideals, and in this sense Socrates, Bruno and Galileo, Newton and Kant, were also Brahmins.

But there is a further problem of ethics and sociology in the Gita's philosophy of the fourfold social order. The Gita teaches the supremacy of *Svadharma* and *Svabhava*. It says that one's own duties should be always performed, constantly and disinterestedly. A man should not try to create social confusion by changing the scheme of his duties. The problem is—do the schemes of duties of the four Varnas exhaust the content of Svabhava? Some interpreters think that the principal purpose of the Gita is not to teach the efficacy and supremacy of the specific fourfold social order, but that its main principle is that action should be chosen with reference to Svabhava. I feel that the Gita is not a text-book on social organization, but its main concern is to teach a fundamental philosophy of the cosmos and a broad spiritual conception of human history. It does not elaborate on the theme of the criteria of the selection of specific actions and duties. But still it stresses that in matters of the specification of social action the authoritative scriptures should be followed. It is possible to construct a list of duties of different social orders, which may vary from the list provided by the Gita as given in the eighteenth chapter. We can also visualize the possibility of the independent operation of the conception of Svabhava, and thus postulate the conception of psychological-rational action as different from the limited conception of social duties prescribed by the Gita or the authoritative Smritis. But this alternation of the theme of psychological-rational action is not sanctioned by the text of the Gita. From a textual study of the eighteenth chapter it follows that the specification of the duties of the four Varnas has been done with reference to the concept of Svabhava.

Hence from the standpoint of the text it is definite that the Gita does not visualize any alternative scheme of Svadharma beyond the duties of the four Varnas. The latter in its conception is supremely important. It does not accept any fundamental natural law, over and against the Varna duties. The latter to it are final and utterly obligatory.

6. *THE GITA AND INDIAN NATIONALISM*

Most historians are now agreed that the Gita was written round about the period from the fifth to the third century B. C. Ancient Indian tradition would ascribe a more remote beginning to it. Since the book was written, it has continued to influence the lives of people and the thought of mystics and intellectuals. In modern India the Gita has been interpreted as a Bible of Indian nationalism. The social and political implications of the book have been stressed by Bankima Chandra, Vivekananda, Lala Lajpat Rai, Lokamanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi. Although in his writings as a Yogi, Sri Aurobindo interprets the Gita as a luminous spiritual synthesis of Karmayoga, Jñānayoga and Bhaktiyoga—the essence, core and supreme teaching of the Bhagavadgita being the devotional surrender of man into the hands of the divine and the total conversion of the human agent into the voluntary agent for the execution of the divine will and action,—still in his career as a teacher, prophet and leader of Indian nationalism, he interpreted the Gita as a gospel of selfless action which sanctions even violence and battle for a righteous cause. The fact that the Gita could serve as the solace to thousands of workers in the cause of the nation and could spur them to the path of selfless action testifies to the inner vitality of this great book. It provided the spiritual strength to thousands in bearing calmly and stoically their sufferings. Modern Indian nationalism has been nurtured not only by the teachings of Burke, Mazzini and Mill and the gospels of the American and French Revolutions, but also to a very great extent by the teaching of Niskama Karmayoga as inculcated in the Gita. To a prostrate and defeated nation the Gita appeared as the gospel of vitality, strength and power. It helped to increase the capacity to endure deep anguish and profound sorrow. It is interesting to note that some Indian martyrs went to the gallows uttering the famous Slokas in the second chapter of the Gita which preach the imperishable character of the human Atman. Thus the Vedantic metaphysics of the immortality of the Atman was used in modern India to support the theory and practice of political resistance against an alien civilization and imperialistic power. The Gita teaches that without any hesitation one should stick fast to his duties. In the fight against British imperialism the scales were not equal. Hence the Gita-teaching alone could goad the Indian people to heroic efforts and sustain them in the face of misery, starvation and persecution. The Gita provided solace to Lokamanya Tilak in his terrible privations. In the Mandalay Jail where he was undergoing incarceration for six years he wrote the monumental commentary on the Gita which is at the same time a critical work on Hindu ethics. Mahatma Gandhi was a great devotee of the Gita. He regarded his constructive programme of the uplift of the Indian masses as a part of *Yajna*. He made his life a supreme dedication to the cause of the emancipation of India. He thought that what he was doing was only for *Lokasamgraha*. Gandhi stressed the notion of service. Although not explicit in the Gita, it is possible to extend the conceptions of *Yajna*, *Dana* and *Tapas* to include social altruism and social service. The stress on social service is not indicative, necessarily, of the influence of Christianity on modern Indian thought. Buddhist monks were champions of human love, and according to the edicts of Asoka it is clear that Buddhism was the first gospel in the world to preach and practise medical relief not only for human beings but also for animals. The Gita stresses the good of all human beings. It also teaches compassion as a cardinal moral attribute. It is certainly true that the conceptions of altruism and active love can be derived from the Gita. The dominant tendency of the Gita is to teach moral and spiritual enlightenment and illumination. But we can also stress the conception of active love implicitly contained in the concepts of Sarvabhutahita and 'Bhutesu Daya'. Hence we feel that Schweitzer is exaggerating the world-and-life-negation trend in the Gita when he says: "But Hinduism in the Bhagavadgita does not yet take the actual step of demanding ethical deeds. Love to God is for it an end in itself. Hinduism does not make love to God find expression in love to mankind. Because it fails to reach the idea of active love, the ethic of the Bhagavadgita is like a smoky fire from which no flames flare upward. One must ever bear in mind, that in the Bhagavadgita there is no question of Love."[1] Modern Indian thinkers and leaders have shown in their writings as well as in their conduct that it is possible to deduce sentiments of human love and active compassion from the Gita. Furthermore, when the Gita says that the Brahmin, the Chandala, the elephant and the dog are to be looked on with the eye of equality by the man of knowledge, it is preaching not only a sentiment of reverence for human life but also for the inferior creatures. In modern Indian thought, these social, political and ethical implications of the Bhagavadgita have been greatly emphasized.

7. *CRITIQUE AND CONCLUSION*

The fact that in medieval India, Vedantic mystics and teachers stressed the significance of the teachings of the Gita and the fact that in modern India the Gita has almost been the Bible of Indian nationalism are undying testimonies to the vitality of the thought of this book. The very fact that it has such a persistent appeal shows that there is something in it which is profoundly moving and deeply significant. It is only natural that a great scripture should be interpreted and reinterpreted in different ages. Thus the supreme spiritual essence, as distinguished from statements which have only a temporary significance and were relevant only for the then contemporary humanity and age, becomes stressed and emphasized. Since the European Renaissance, there has been a decline of the theocentric approach to things. Science has tended to substitute for God some impersonal force or man. Auguste Comte was the prophet of scientific positivism and sociology. He felt that once common education was established under the direction of a spiritual power, the tyranny of the capitalist class could be definitely minimized. He stressed the growth of a new social morality as an antidote to modern industrialism. According to Comte, "Our ultimate state will exhibit a classification of society more distinct than any we know in all sides of human life. From High Priest of Humanity, down to the humblest labourer, society will show the same principle at work distributing rank : Generality of view decreasing as independence of life increases." But the verdict of time has been that the positivistic conception of social salvation to be attained by the sociologists who are to be the high priests of this new society has not borne much fruit. The great danger of the present time is the debasement of the human being. Man should not be treated as a mere means, but as the bearer of moral values and the giver of spiritual law for himself. The present perversions of democracy, socialism and communism point out that mere objective rationalization is inadequate. What we need to-day is a new form of divine humanism. Man has forgotten his spiritual nature. The values of the human spirit have to be redeemed. The Gita says that it is *Sraddha* (faith) that constitutes the essence of a man. Hence it is essential that the values which we cherish should be rooted in our being and personality. Unless we can discriminate between the good and the bad we cannot proceed in the right direction. It is the first imperative of noble action that we should have a harmonious, integrated and right-promoting system of values. The Gita preaches a gospel of dynamic vitality. But behind this dynamic vitality there should be the spiritual fervour provided by *Sraddha* in a system of moral and character-building values.

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[1] Albert Schweitzer, *Indian Thought and Its Development*, (New York, Henry Holt & Co., 1936), p. 193.

From an empirical and sociological standpoint, however, there are certain weak elements in the Gita's philosophy of history. The Gita preaches the inactivity and the impersonality of the true Self of man. It teaches both natural and spiritual determination. It accepts the Saṁkhya conception of the Prakriti as the executive power, the Purusha being only a luminous witness-self. Since the Prakriti, however, is in its foundations only the power of the Godhead, this naturalistic determinism is not opposed to the all-pervading conception of spiritual determinism. But a rigorous conception of determinism,—whether the determinism be of nature or of spiritual forces,—tends to undermine vigorous action on which the Gita is so insistent. The conception of the impersonality of the human self or the notion that the human being is only an instrument in the hands of God is ultimately a gospel which may enervate the human agent and may degenerate into a cult of fatalism. In other words, the Gita has not been able to reconcile the notion of natural and spiritual determinism and the conception of vigorous action which it inculcates for Arjuna. What is needed is a more comprehensive framework which will stress not merely determinism but also the creative autonomy of collective efforts in building the mighty edifice of human culture and civilization. I feel that the Gita does not stress the role of the creative human subject in the historical context. The medieval Indian commentators have been busy torturing the text to yield the particular meaning which would exalt their own cult, and they have been unmindful of the historical, political and sociological implications and significance of this scripture. Any great scripture which is to be meant for the people and not only for the inspired mystic does, and should, contain sociological and historical teachings and ideas. The Christian Bible has been interpreted and reinterpreted as a social philosophy, and there is no reason why the Bhagavadgita should not be analysed as a philosophy of history and its inadequacies in that field pointed out. The Gita tends to exaggerate the concept of divine determinism. In its quest for exalting the great power of God it tends to play loosely with the law of contradiction. When it uses such phrases as 'both fame and ignominy proceed from me,' it prepares the foundations of fatalism and for the development of an ethic which is not mindful of the supreme importance of human action for indvidual life and historical movement. At times, the tone of the Gita becomes too dogmatic. It repeatedly stresses that this teaching should not be imparted to those who are jealous of or speak ill of Krishna. It says that only the people deficient in intellect disregard Krishna. Even for those who accept a spiritual interpretation of history, this kind of dogmatic doctrine of make-believe sounds rather jarring. The otherwise very serious and earnest tone of the book is impaired in this way.

Another weakness in the Gita's philosophy of history is the absence of a theory of well-worked out universal natural law which could be binding on all human beings. In other words, there is no definite and explicated notion of *Sādharan Dharma* as distinct from the *Svadharma* of the four Varnas. It is true that in its conception of the *Sthitaprajña*, the *Bhakta*, the *Trigunatita* and the *Yogi*, there are references to profound moral conceptions, but most of the attributes refer to internal purification and reflective abstraction, and are not directly relevant to social and historical action. The Gita does not prescribe specifically a criterion for the resolution of a conflict if some of these moral conceptions were to involve a contradiction of the duties of the specific castes. It is possible that in the case of a Vaishya Bhakta, the demands of the price mechanism may come into conflict with his duties as a devotee of God. To succeed in business he may have to accept one type of economic ethics, but this may conflict with the norms of spirtual life as expounded in the scripture. What are to be the decisive criteria of choice if the Brahmin Bhakta or *Sthitaprajña* has to choose between the compulsive demands of national patriotism and the inexorable canon of *Ahiṁsā* ? But from its general tone and the environmental and historical context wherein the teaching of the Gita is placed, it almost seems definite that in any situation involving a conflict the Gita would sanction the superior obligatory character of the caste duties. A further difficulty is involved here. If according to the Gita the duties of the *Varnas*, regulated according to qualities, action and natural endowments, are of the utmost significance, and if according to this scheme it is the duty of the Kshatriya to lord it over all (Isvarabhava), it is not clear ai to why the propensity to seek power is condemned as suited to those who are of *Asuric* dispositions and who are fated for hell.

A similar objection can also be raised about the duties of the Vaisyas. If according to the eighteenth chapter, devotion to economic pursuits is the duty dictated by the *svabhava* of a Vaisya, there is no reason to condemn the acquisition of wealth as the Gita does in the sixteenth chapter. If acquisition of wealth is condemnable and is to be regarded as something fitted for the *Asuras*, it is tantamount to saying that whosoever is engaged in pecuniary pursuits is engaging himself in unspiritual work. Hence either exception has to be made for the wealth-begetting pursuits of the Vaisyas, or the contradiction involved in the simultaneous presence of these two statements in the same book has to be resolved, by suppressing one of the statements.

From the sociological and historical standpoint some further weaknesses may be pointed out. But these criticisms do not negate the otherwise profound assertions of a spiritual philosophy of history contained in this book. Just as St. Augustine, Dante, Bossuet and Hegel tried to expand, reinterpret and modify some of the insights of the Bible concerning a spiritual philosophy of history, so also it is possible to construct a comprehensive philosophy of history on the basis of the great and profound lessons of this noble and sublime work.[1] The construction of such a spiritual philosophy of history is one of the several ways in which the vitality of its message may be brought to the surface and made to influence social and political decisions and so the destiny of nations.

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[1] V. P, Varma. Autumn Introduction to a New Philosophy of History, *The Visvaharati Quarterly*, Autumn 1956.

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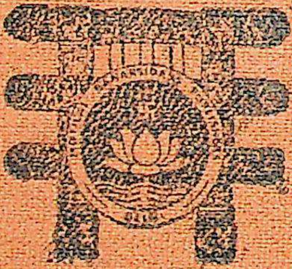

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